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The Washington Monthly

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While the public interest groups fiddle … campaign finance reform burns

by Michelle Cottle

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Letters

Careless Whispers

Susan Threadgill's lead item in "Who's Who" (July/Aug. 1997) castigates a pair of unnamed journalists for denouncing President Clinton's moral character on a recent talk show. Threadgill's complaint is based on the fact that said journalists were "rumored to have carried on a torrid, adulterous affair a few years back." Well, did they have an affair or didn't they? If Threadgill can't say with certainty, aren't these journalists entitled to the same benefit of the doubt that the *Monthly* champions for others damaged by unsubstantiated innuendo, Clinton among them? It strikes me as weak to damn these journalists simply on the strength of "rumor."

STEPHEN THOMAS
Millburn, NJ

A Suspicious Study

Sherri Eisenberg's piece on the differing news reports of the NICHD study of day care (June 1997) missed one of the study's more astounding aspects: It is not a study of day care as we ordinarily think of it. Counted as day care were all arrangements other than full-time care by the biological mother. If the child's father or another relative such as a grandmother or aunt took care of the child part of the time, it was considered day care. Since extended families all over the world are the traditional means of caring for young children, and since infants readily bond to the continuous and nurturing people in their worlds, this odd notion that only mothers can do the job is a recent invention of our society.

Comparing mother-only care with all other kinds is clearly not going to provide much contrast in the studies's-responses. One would have to be very dense to fail to understand what the investigators were hoping to find.

IRVING LAZAR
Nashville, TN

What Can't Be Taught

I don't support the status quo in teacher certification, but why do you insist that a person who "spent his career computing taxes" is *ipso facto* suited to teach eighth grade math ("Tilting," July/Aug. 1997)? You seem to assume that knowledge of the curriculum is the only consideration. As any experienced teacher will tell you, eighth graders are a breed apart. Think of your own kids when they were prepubescent. Think about what it would be like to be shut in a room with 30 of them. I taught eighth graders for nearly 15 years, and I loved it. But it takes sort of an off-kilter personality to put up with the slings and arrows they toss out. When smart people of good will refuse to recognize that it takes a special skill to be a teacher, and that not every retired CEO or general can walk off the street and do it, I am disheartened.

SUSAN OHANIAN
Charlotte, VT

Charles Peters replies:

I agree. That's why I believe in auditioning applicants to see if they've got what it takes in the classroom. Aptitude for teaching is just as important as subject knowledge. Too many teachers–including too many university professors–lay eggs with their students. What the Monthly *has long opposed and what I was disturbed about in the item Ohanian cites is the way public schools have used a lack of education credits as an excuse for keeping people who really know their subjects from teaching. I should have made clear that I was assuming the knack for teaching, that is, of course, as essential as subject knowledge. What is not essential is a mind numbed by boring education courses. The unfortunate truth is that although instruction in methodology is not necessarily dull and useless, it usually is.*

Double Standard

I was disturbed by one aspect of Jason DeParle's review of *The Myth of the Welfare Queen*. In discussing one young welfare mother, he notes that she first gave birth at age 12 "after being raped," then irresponsibly went on to have five more children with "no particular plan for supporting them."

As the mother of a 12-year-old girl, I am horrified by Mr. DeParle's rather cursory reference to this young woman's tragic history. My own child has had every advantage that two loving, economically secure parents can provide. Yet if she were subjected to the trauma of child rape, followed by the ordeal of pregnancy and birth, I can't imagine how she—or any other child—could ever fully recover. So why do we expect a poor little girl with neither strong family support nor access to good professional help to pull up her own socks and become a healthy, responsible mother and worker?

I'm getting heartily sick of the disparate attitudes we take toward the misfortunes of the rich and the poor. When wealthy, famous people sink into alcoholism or drug abuse because of the stress of success, then use their fabulous medical benefits and bottomless pockets to pay for a detox vacation, we slap their pretty faces on the cover of *People* and applaud their strength and courage in battling their woes. But we expect impoverished little girls to miraculously heal themselves, or be subjected to scorn and derision from the more fortunate.

ELIZABETH AUSTIN
Oak Park, IL

Err Jordan

I do not intend to comment on the substance of your writer's portrait of Vernon Jordan (June 1997), but it was said of old that reporters have a concern to get their facts straight, and are given credibility by how well they do so. Here are some of Michelle Cottle's misses:

Jordan left the NAACP not in 1964 but in 1963, and not to head the Southern Regional Council's Voter Education Project—he would do that in 1966—but to be assistant to SRC's executive director (me, then) and soon assistant to VEP's then director, the esteemed Wiley Branton. Also, the VEP—which began in 1962, not 1961—was not ever "launched" by President Kennedy.

Finally, though not exactly a mistake, the sole reference to Mary Jordan as a "caterer for upscale Atlanta during its segregation days" is a wretched characterization of a wonderful woman who

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raised three sons in a public housing project. Jordan has been one of the few civil rights leaders who had that beginning. Reporters sincerely interested in what makes him tick might begin there.

LESLIE W. DUNBAR
Durham, NC

Self(ish)-Audits

Alexander Volokh's "Case For Environmental Self-Audits" in your June issue may, as Volokh claims, "foster an atmosphere of cooperation between the regulators and the regulated," but it sure won't increase compliance with our environmental laws. A simple look at our handling of financial audits makes that clear.

For decades, we have required companies to conduct audits of their financial practices that are not privileged and that can be used against the companies in court. Partly as a result, companies generally comply with our financial laws or are held accountable, and our financial system has become the envy of the world. Yet Volokh proposes that, when it comes to environmental practices, we should rely on a system of voluntary audits and disclosure, give companies immunity from prosecution for violations, and make the audits privileged and inadmissible in court. That may be desirable to those who care more about money than the environment, but, for the rest of us, it doesn't make sense at all.

ARTHUR H. BRYANT
Washington, DC

A High Price

Robert Pastor's perceptive review of *American Prisoner: The Memoirs of Manuel Noriega* (June 1997) is unfortunately marred by its final sentence. "In the end, whatever one thinks of the U.S. invasion, the world is better off with Noriega behind bars."

On the contrary, whatever one thinks of Noriega, the United States is not better off when its own government puts someone in jail using a parade of self-serving sleazeballs and known secret payoffs to serve a domestic political purpose. Does Dr. Pastor really believe that there are no consequences when the U.S. government ignores truth, fairness, and justice to remove one person it came to find inconvenient and uncooperative? I can think of a dozen countries that might use that example to justify their own worst excesses.

GODFREY HARRIS
Los Angeles, CA

The Real Scandal

Many of the points made in Steven Stark's "Local News: The Biggest Scandal on TV" (June 1997) also apply to many newspapers in today's chain-operated, monopoly markets. These modern-day news hucksters take their cues from television: abbreviate and simplify, hype and infotain. This dumbing down devalues reporters, underestimates readers, and ill-serves the Fourth Estate mandate of a free and responsible press.

At a time when more decentralized government begs for more oversight, not less, the press too often seeks out the observable over the explanatory. Bottom line: Newspapers should do what television doesn't—give context and depth, nuance and clarity to events. That's what we need, and that's what many orphaned readers want from their local newspapers.

BARBARA ALLEN KENNEY
Dunwoody, GA

A Private Affair

While agreeing with many of the points made by Elizabeth Austin ("Bill and Paula," July/Aug. 1997), I am puzzled by one of her conclusions. Ms. Austin writes that if indeed an encounter between then Governor Clinton and Ms. Jones took place as outlined by Ms. Jones in her suit, then Mr. Clinton owes Ms. Jones a "public" apology. This conclusion is inconsistent with the dichotomy between social boorishness and actionable behavior that Ms. Austin seeks to establish. In short, the alleged behavior, ugly as it may have been, was essentially private. Thus, if the event occurred, although Ms. Jones may be owed a heart-felt "I feel your pain" apology, this was a private affair and any apology should also be private.

GRAYDON JOHN FORRER
Alexandria, VA

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Tilting at Windmills

BY CHARLES PETERS

The Nazi's Retirement Plan • Big Wheel Mammas
Gandhi's Sweet Tooth • The Bell Atlantic Hernia • Pearl Harbor II

I DON'T OFTEN PRAISE REPUBLICAN legislators. But a bill that House Civil Service Subcommittee Chairman John L. Mica is planning to sponsor this fall deserves your support. It gives outstanding performance greater weight than seniority in protecting civil servants from downsizing.

Al Gore has been gutless on this issue. Ask anyone connected with the Reinventing Government task force if Al ever breathed a word about making sure the incompetent get dismissed and the good guys are retained. What you hear is a long silence.

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IF YOU GREW UP IN THE '30S AND '40s as I did, you were in danger of thinking you were a failure unless you were a Clark Gable or a John Wayne. If you weren't the two-fisted macho type, and I definitely was not, you could really make a fool of yourself by pretending to be a tough guy in order to impress the girls. That's why I'm so grateful to the late James Stewart. In that era, he and his friend Henry Fonda provided two of the few role models for natural behavior. They gave you hope that you might win the girl even if you couldn't win the fight.

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A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH DISTRIBUTED by the Associated Press is one that I hope was not seen by any bright terrorist. It showed five nuclear aircraft carriers—USS George Washington, USS John C. Stennis, USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, USS Theodore Roosevelt, and USS Enterprise—all tied up next to one another in Norfolk, Virginia. I thought Pearl Harbor was supposed to have taught the admirals that this kind of thing is not a very good idea.

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DO BLACK AMERICANS HAVE A problem similar to mine with Clark Gable? Do they feel they can't show weakness? Hillary Clinton discussed this possibility in a graduation speech this spring at Washington's Banneker High School. She told of a study conducted at the University of California of why able students were failing. Among the blacks a major reason was that they didn't feel they could ask for help. *Newsweek* reports that blacks resist going to psychiatrists for the same reason.

In an era dominated by the Clark Gables and John Waynes, only Jimmy Stewart and Henry Fonda gave you hope that you might win the girl even if you couldn't win the fight.

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SPEAKING OF JOHN Wayne, is that who all the nice ladies are identifying with when they wheel into the neighborhood shopping center in one of those big sport utility vehicles? Whatever the motivation, the growing popularity of these monsters is something for the rest of us to worry about. When one of them crashes into your regular car, your chances of being killed are four times higher than the other guy's. After all, a Chevrolet Suburban weighs up to 6,750 pounds, compared to 3,326 for a Ford Taurus. Furthermore, they are gasoline guzzlers that, in the words of Sierra Club researcher Daniel F. Becker, "create more pollution and increase our addiction to OPEC oil." The latest bad news is that Mercedes is now producing these things—so the buyer will not only be able to show that he or she is big, tough, and ready to tangle but also that he or she has the wealth to buy the best. But then again, the affluent do need something to do with all that money they're going to save on capital gains and estate taxes.

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LAST YEAR, JAMES W. Hawkins represented companies that make medical devices on whose behalf he lobbied on issues involving the Food and Drug Administration. This year he's working on the staff of a senator. His lobbying work has been taken over by his wife. What is Hawkins doing for the senator? Drafting what *The Washington Post*'s John Schwartz describes as a "broad piece of legislation that would change many ways in which the Food and Drug Administration operates." Hmmm ...

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OUR NOMINATION FOR THE STORY least likely to advance the reporter's career at his paper: The article by Michael M. Phillips in the May 22 issue of *The Wall Street Journal* entitled "Tax on Wealthy is Boosting U.S. Revenue."

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I HAVE LONG CONSIDERED THE campaign for non-lethal weapons to be the most quixotic of my causes, but now I learn from Douglas Paster-

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nak of *U.S. News & World Report* that "for a good 40 years, the U.S. military has quietly been pursuing weapons of this sort." Maybe the military is becoming less macho while the rest of society is becoming more so.

Seriously, non-lethal weapons are important in a world where humanitarian and peacekeeping activities are likely to provide most of the work for the American military. If a crowd is getting out of hand, why have to face a choice of killing them or letting the riot roll? Why not have a humane but effective alternative? Even when facing enemy soldiers, sometimes the legitimate military objective can be attained by stunning the opponent instead of killing him.

••••••••

THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINistration has a handout entitled, "Ensuring Your Personal Safety—Violence in the Workplace." Among the early signals of violent behavior it identifies: "Moral righteousness and believing the organization is not following its rules and procedures."

What troubles me about this is that it precisely describes the kind of whistle-blower who is essential to the health of any organization. Certainly one or more of these fellows would be useful at the FAA regional center in New York where the errors made by air traffic controllers have risen 26 percent in the last year, a situation that seems very much in need of a stiff neck who will insist, "this won't do."

But large bureaucratic organizations, whether public or private, have a natural antipathy for—or an almost automatic immune rejection of—the whistle-blower. Don't make waves. Don't stick your neck out. Go along, get along. These are the great bureaucratic commandments.

The most recent illustrations are the CIA's Richard M. Barlow and the State Department's Richard Nuccio. Nuccio had his security clearance blocked because he had told Congress the truth about the CIA's involvement with the murderers in the Guatemalan military. Barlow's sin is that he protested to his superiors that Congress was being lied to about Pakistan's nuclear capabilities. Barlow was right. His reward was that he got fired.

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I WANT TO THROTTLE THE BELL Atlantic executives responsible for this year's District of Columbia phone directories. Residential phone numbers are in one book, which isn't all that fat thanks to Marion Barry's totally incompetent governance, which has left only half a million people living in the city. Business phone numbers are in a totally different book where they are combined with yellow pages in a volume that *is* big—you need a fork lift to pick it up.

If a friend does not answer his home phone and you want to call his office, you have to reach for the yellow pages and risk a hernia. The reason for this is that Bell Atlantic is trying to force you to use its yellow pages rather than those a competitor dared to publish.

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LARGE ORGANIZATIONS TEND TO reject the unusual person, period. The innovator can be as unpopular as the whistle-blower. A recent example is the Army's failure to give a combat brigade to Colonel Douglas Macgregor, which could keep him from making general. In mock battles, he won so often and handled his battalion "so adroitly" according to Richard J. Newman of *U.S. News & World Report*, "that observers thought he had cheated." In the Gulf War he directed 10 U.S. tanks and 13 Bradley fighting vehicles in a battle that destroyed nearly 70 Iraqi armored vehicles at no loss to the U.S.

According to Newman, Macgregor believes that the Army's division of 18,000 soldiers is "too cumbersome" with "too many layers of command for modern warfare and should be broken down into agile combat groups a third the size." That doesn't sound dumb to me.

••••••••

I HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE rich donors who give their millions to Harvard, the school that, with its $8.8 billion endowment, needs help the least. Now I see in the news that this year the federal government is giving Harvard $230 million above the assistance provided by student loans and Pell grants.

At least one donor seems aware other worthy educational institutions may be more deserving. The MacArthur Foundation has just announced a grant of $750,000 each to six small liberal arts colleges that are under-endowed but distinguished for their innovative approach to liberal education.

Other foundations, wealthy individuals, and the federal government should follow MacArthur's lead. So should high school seniors. Instead of applying like a herd of sheep to only Ivy League schools, they should show how smart they are by searching out the less well-known colleges that offer an education that is as good or better than that produced by the Ivies. Sister Joel Read, the president of Alverno College, one of the MacArthur recipients, says, "This place prides itself on teaching." Can Harvard say as much?

••••••••

THE INCOME, IN CONSTANT DOLlars, of the richest five percent of Americans has risen 54 percent in the last 20 years, but that of the bottom 20 percent has only increased 1.5 percent. Farm workers are even worse off. Their income has *dropped* 7 percent.

This country needs strong unions that will fight for people like the farm workers who are being denied a fair share of the profits they help create. But we don't need unions that defend feather bedding, protect incompetent workers, or demand wage hikes that are not justified by increased productivity as too many unions did during the stagflation of the '70s.

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WHENEVER I CONDEMN OTHERS for bigotry, in the back of my mind there's a nagging awareness that I'm not a total innocent myself. My problem, probably a result of having grown up in the Nazi era, is with Germans.

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For example, my solution to the Jewish homeland question was to evict not Arabs, but the people who cheered Adolf Hitler, giving the Jews the loveliest part of Bavaria and packing the Germans off to places like Dusseldorf and other dreary areas of the former Third Reich. So you can imagine how I reacted to the recent news that the Germans are still making wartime disability payments to former members of the SS, which had been declared, if anyone had any doubt, a criminal organization by the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal. The German government explains that the question of responsibility for war crimes "should be kept separate from the welfare questions." Of course.

As for Ken Starr's case against Hillary Clinton, my question is, can it be an obstruction of justice to cover up a non-crime?

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CAN THE NETWORKS afford to make the free time available to political candidates that many of us feel will be essential to overall campaign finance reform? According to FCC chairman Reed Hundt, all they have to do is give up the spots they devote to self-promotion. The time devoted to these "watch *Seinfeld* tomorrow night" spots has tripled in the last three years according to Hundt.

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WHEN I WENT TO LAW SCHOOL I expected to be fascinated by courses like Criminal Law and bored by Contracts and Trusts and Estates. I *was* bored by Trusts and Estates and not as fascinated by Criminal Law as I had expected. Astonishingly, the course I found most stimulating of all was Contracts. I realized that its fundamental principle—honoring the reasonable expectations we have aroused in others—was fundamental to making society work. Many of our deepest feelings about fair play are embedded in the English common law of contracts. My reason for mentioning this is not merely to reminisce (although of course I love to do that), but to raise a problem with the handover of Hong Kong to the Chinese.

When I first visited Hong Kong, like practically everyone else I was struck by how well it was working economically. An old hand explained that the secret was Chinese industriousness combined with English law. What he meant was that energetic Hong Kong Chinese businessmen could count on having their contracts with strangers enforced by British law. Trust between strangers was not, he said, a strong characteristic of traditional Chinese culture. Nor does it seem to be highly valued by the present Chinese government. Edward Gargan of *The New York Times* recently wrote about what he called "Beijing's cavalier attitude toward contractual agreements."

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DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE between rural and city mail carriers? The rural carrier is paid based on the amount of mail he delivers. The more efficient he is, the sooner he can head home. City carriers are paid for the time it takes them to complete each day's work. They have no incentive to be efficient. The longer they take to deliver the mail, the more they get paid. Shouldn't we pay the city carriers the same way we pay the rural ones?

I'm indebted for these facts to a carrier named Jared Scarborough of Payson, Ill., who also asks that readers please remember what for him is the most essential corollary to the golden rule: when a carrier is expected, Keep The Dog Indoors.

• • • • • • • •

CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERTARIANS who rail against government should be reminded of the government we surely need. One example is the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Does anyone really want to abolish it? Maybe a few lunatics who want to increase their chances of being exposed to ebola. The trouble with so many of the anti-governmentites is that they love to talk the talk without thinking the think.

The libertarians hate to admit any government is needed. The conservatives are willing to concede a little bit might be necessary but they believe in turning it over to the states. The problem is that state governments are no better, and usually worse, than the federal government. Let me cite some recent headlines: "Corporate Gifts Help Gain Access to U.S. Governors," "Education journal calls states' efforts nothing to brag on," and "States, Too, Are Plagued by Money's Power in Politics."

In just one state, Wisconsin, we find stories of the governor's top aide being slipped $151,500 on the side by the Republican National Committee. It appears he was steering state contracts to GOP contributors. On down the bureaucratic line, Wisconsin school administrators have been discovered taking sham retirements. They retire, start collecting their pensions, then they get rehired as "contractors" and continue to collect their pensions. If you check you may find this racket being practiced in your city and state.

One racket that you're almost certain to find is the travel con. Even clerks seem to have to attend conferences which are usually held in Honolulu or San Juan. Washington's mayor, who is admittedly worse than most but who, with the exception of his cocaine conviction, is still typical of other state and local officials, in the nature, if not the extent of his official sins, found it necessary this year, even while his city was falling apart, to take trips to Asia and Africa.

We've recently written about the Mayor's absurd security detail. Now we learn from Vincent S. Morris of *The Washington Times* that the Mayor has, instead of the 75 he has admitted, 142 employees working in his person-

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al office. Again I bet your governor and maybe your mayor, while they may not have as many, will still have far more personal staff than the receptionist and the handful of secretaries and administrative assistants common sense suggests is all they really need.

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IF YOU'VE BEEN AROUND AS LONG as I have and work with young people as much as I do, you are going to be asked for advice. And when you give it, you want it to be helpful. So often it turns out to be a matter of finding the right word or combination of words so that what you say will really register. An example of what I mean occurred several years ago when one of our employees was going through a bout of anorexia and I was trying to talk her into eating. Time and again I would try and fail to get through to her. Then one day I told her "I ran into Mike Kinsley on the street and he said you look scrawny." That did it. The next day she was eating everything on the table. Michael had found the word that registered.

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AS WE HAVE OFTEN POINTED OUT, the deregulation of airline fares has not been a blessing for people on routes dominated by one airline. The latest evidence comes from a Department of Transportation study, which found that where US Airways dominates short trips such as the one from Washington to Pittsburgh and Washington to Charlotte, the result is one-way fares of $240 and $227. On the other hand, you can go all the way to Tampa from Washington for only $138 because there is competition between United and USAir. Orlando to Washington is $130 for the same reason. Just something to remember the next time some conservative tells you about the blessings of deregulation.

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A MARYLAND WOMAN HAS WRITten challenging my assertion in the last issue that if enough money were spent on drug treatment, drug addiction could be dramatically reduced. After reading her letter I still believe what I said. But she made a point that helps explain why even though addiction can be reduced, it will be very difficult if not impossible to eliminate. Heroin addiction offers escape from pain, either physical or mental, she explains. "So long as the pain is greater than the cost of killing it, people will use heroin."

I have always been proud of the fact that, with the help of a wonderful Army nurse named Bonnie, I overcame an incipient addiction to morphine. But this woman's letter reminds me of an important fact. The physical pain that had gotten me on morphine in the first place had disappeared by the time I kicked the habit. I did not have to meet the challenge of overcoming the addiction while the pain persisted.

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HALEY BARBOUR'S I-DON'T-recalls are no more persuasive than Hillary Clinton's. Speaking of Mrs. Clinton, I have little doubt that she has been less than candid about her sins. But I also have little doubt that her sins did not amount to crimes. My question is, can it be an obstruction of justice to cover up a non-crime?

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SPEAKING OF ADDICTION, A letter written to *The Washington Times* from Jeffrey M. Edmondson tells a story about Mahatma Gandhi that I'd never heard. A woman brought her son to see Gandhi and asked the great man to tell the boy to quit chewing the sugar cane that was rotting his teeth. Gandhi thought a minute and then asked her to bring her son back next week. She was puzzled but did as he asked. When she returned with the boy a week later, Gandhi proceeded to explain the evils of chewing sugar. After the boy agreed to give it up, the woman thanked Gandhi but asked him, "Why could you not do this last week when I first brought him?" "Madame," Gandhi replied, "Last week I chewed sugar cane."

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An Officer and a Gentleman

Why the concept isn't as silly as it may seem

BY COL. HARRY G. SUMMERS JR.

"GOOD MILITARY ORDER AND DISCIPLINE." The phrase itself has an old-fashioned Victorian ring to it. Not surprisingly it was greeted by mockery and derision when it was evoked by the military as the basis for what Democratic Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa called the military's "overly moralistic" crackdown on adultery in the ranks. "I'll tell you, the Pentagon is not in touch with reality in this so-called question of fraternization," said Republican Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott of Mississippi. "I mean, get real. You're still dealing with human beings."

On June 7, 1997, *New York Times* columnist Russell Baker spoke for many when he questioned the "sexual hysteria now racking the military." "What else was to be expected," he asked. "The military is not a Boy Scout Camporee. It is teaching young people to kill other young people, a work that does not prosper when men are expected to behave like gentlemen and women like ladies."

Baker could not be more wrong. It is precisely because the military is about killing people and destroying things that their leaders must have the strength of character inherent in a gentleman and gentlewoman. Otherwise, as Carl von Clausewitz, the great Prussian philosopher of war, warned some 165 years ago, "the mass will drag [them] down to the brutish world where danger is shirked and shame is unknown." What happens when leaders fail to act like "gentlemen" and "gentlewomen" is as near as today's headlines.

COL. HARRY G. SUMMERS JR., *a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, is a syndicated columnist for the* Los Angeles Times *and editor of* Vietnam *magazine.*

Mob Rule

"European Inquiry Says Serbs' Forces Have Raped 20,000" read the headline of a January 8, 1993 *New York Times* story describing how Serb soldiers had raped—and in many cases killed—Muslim women "as part of a deliberate pattern of abuse aimed at driving them from their homes in Bosnia and Herzegovina." "Killing Spree Blamed on Troops in New Congo," announced the June 8, 1997 *Washington Post*, reporting that troops in the old Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) "have killed hundreds of people and torched scores of houses in attacks on villages."

Such breakdowns of decency are not limited to Serbian soldiers gleefully carrying out their leader's grotesque "ethnic cleansing" policy, nor to ill-trained and undisciplined African soldiers embarking on wild killing sprees. Western armies are also susceptible. "Belgian soldiers go on trial for torture," read the June 23, 1997 *Washington Times*, telling of how an elite Belgian Army unit in Somalia "roasted a child over an open fire." And the June 25, 1997 *Baltimore Sun* reported that "two Italian generals resigned in the face of increased evidence that their soldiers tortured Somalian villagers." In March of 1995, the Canadian government disbanded its entire elite Airborne Regiment after evidence of atrocities against Somali teenagers came to light. The ensuing scandal led to the October 1996 resignation of both the Canadian Defense Department's Chief of Staff, and the Minister of Defense.

The U.S. army has also experienced the consequences of disorder within its ranks. In the closing days of Vietnam and in its immediate aftermath, young lieutenants and captains peered into the abyss, as the American military disintegrated before their

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very eyes. "Never again" is the watchword of those who survived that maelstrom and who have risen to become today's senior officers.

What in 1965 was a magnificent fighting force had turned into a drug-ridden rabble three years later. The My Lai massacre in March 1968 was terrible evidence of that degeneration. Soldiers of the Americal Division's First Platoon, "Charlie" Company, under the command of Lieutenant William L. Calley, Jr., perpetrated the most horrible atrocities against innocent civilians in the Army's history. First publicly revealed in March 1969, it was investigated by Army Lt. Gen. W.R. Peers, who found the facts to be even more gruesome than portrayed in the media. Old women, children, babes in arms were raped, sodomized, and brutally murdered during an hours-long killing frenzy by a unit run amok.

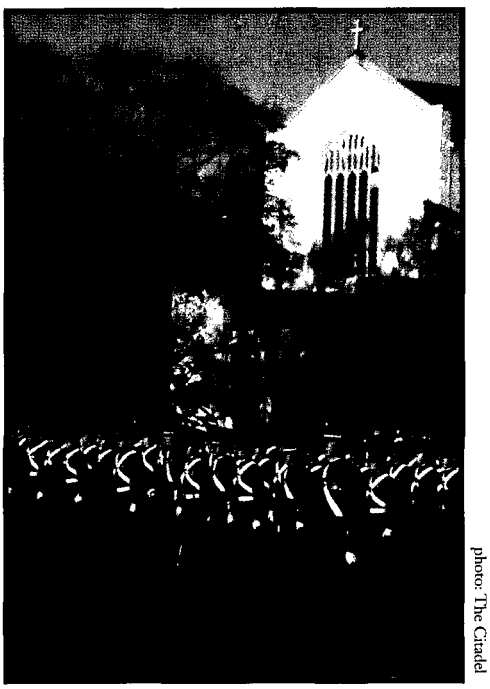

photo: The Citadel

The army searched in vain for an explanation, believing at first that, through accident of assignment, Calley's platoon had an inordinate number of uneducated misfits and miscreants. But upon investigation, it found the precise opposite. The platoon had a higher IQ level and a higher percentage of high-school graduates and men with college credits than average. The only variable that could be found was leadership. From the company commander to the squad leaders, the leadership was severely lacking. It was not a rifle platoon. It was an armed mob, bereft of any vestige of good military order and discipline.

A 1970 professionalism study by the Army War College ordered in the wake of the My Lai revelations found a precipitous decline in leadership throughout the Army. The perception was that the "system" forced officers "to abandon their scruples and ignore the precepts of duty and honor; and if necessary to lie and cheat in order to remain successful and competitive."

Although most Americans were not aware of it, the military had disintegrated to the point where the security of the nation was imperiled. Racial confrontations were widespread, drug rings had taken over entire units, indiscipline was endemic. Lying and false reports were commonplace. At one time, for example, all the air defense systems in Europe were down because of lack of maintenance and spare parts, yet were falsely reported as fully operational.

Road to Redemption

Adding to the decline was the "Modern Volunteer Army Concept" and its motto, "The Army Wants To Join You." With the suspension of the draft in January 1973, many in the Army felt that to attract volunteers to fill its ranks, the Army had to liberalize itself to be more like civilian society and relax the "irritants" that made military life unattractive.

Unwittingly it was repeating a pattern that had led to disaster in the opening days of the Korean War in June 1950. *In This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness*, a 1963 book which became a minor classic within the military after the Vietnam War, historian and Korean War veteran T.R. Fehrenbach observed that "liberal society, in its heart, wants not only domination of the military, but acquiescence of the military toward the liberal view of life."

"Domination and control society should have," he continued. "But acquiescence society may not have, if it wants an army worth a damn. By the very nature of its mission, the military must maintain a hard and illiberal view of life and the world. Society's purpose is to live; the military's is to stand ready, if need be, to die." Congress, which has the power "to make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces," recognized that critical difference when it promulgated the 1951 Uniform Code of Military Justice, the successor to the Articles of War that had governed the military since its beginnings.

While in many respects the rules for the military are similar to civilian law, they also include prohibitions that have no civilian equivalent. These include such wartime capital offenses as cowardice in the face of the enemy, disobedience of a direct order, and striking a superior officer—all specifically designed to bolster the ability to fight and win on the battlefield. To that end, laws are also included to ensure "good military order and discipline" and to denounce "con-

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duct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" (which specifically includes "gentlewoman").

"Not everyone is or can be expected to meet ideal moral standards," says the original 1951 edition of the *Manual for Courts-Martial*, "but there is a limit of tolerance below which the standards of an officer cannot fall without compromising his standing as an officer or his character as gentleman."

In the mid-1970s, Vietnam War battlefield commanders assumed top leadership positions, including Army Chief of Staff Gen. Fred C. Weyand of the 25th Infantry Division and his successor, Gen. Bernard Rogers of the 1st Infantry Division. Charter members of the "Never Again" club, they pulled the military up by its bootstraps. A major effort was launched to reverse the initial permissiveness of the all-volunteer force. New rules from Congress enabled commanders to immediately get rid of misfits and malcontents and a "back to basics" movement swept the military. Discipline was tightened, hands-on training emphasized, the Non Commissioned Officers Corps was revitalized with rigorous new standards, and professionalism was stressed at all levels.

By the late 1970s, the military had fully recovered from the Vietnam morass. "Good military order and discipline" had been restored, and new warfighting doctrines had been adopted to once again focus on the basic mission of fighting and winning the nation's wars. But new stresses began to develop. In order to maintain the intelligence standards increasingly necessary for a high-technology military, the former restrictions on married and single-parent enlistees were relaxed and more and more military occupational specialties were opened to women. By the eve of the 1990 Persian Gulf War the U.S. had 223,154 women under arms, more than four times as many as the rest of our NATO allies combined. Critics claimed (and continue to claim) this change in force composition would lead to disaster on the battlefield.

The Persian Gulf War, however, was proof that, changes in force composition notwithstanding, "good military order and discipline" had indeed been restored. Over 532,000 U.S. military personnel were deployed to Kuwait, including 37,000 women who served in a wide variety of combat support and combat service support positions. There were 3,500 cases of wrongdoing, including 24 cases of sexual assault, of which only 191 were serious enough to be tried by court-martial. With a crime rate of 3.5 per 100,000, "the remarkable thing about this operation," said the U.S. Central Command Judge Advocate, "has been the exceptionally low level of acts of indiscipline."

Never Let Your Guard Down

But, like liberty, the maintenance of "good military order and discipline" requires constant vigilance. Changes in force composition did create new strains, not so much the increase in the number of women in the force but the major shift from a primarily single force to one that is mostly married.

Where in a bachelor military the rules against adultery had little practical application, in today's military, in which 63 percent of the force is not only married, but more often than not deployed away from home on "peacekeeping" missions, the rules take on a new meaning. What had been primarily a moral offense is now an operational offense that has a direct impact on troop morale and troop efficiency. To understand how, you need only look at the story which ran in the July 15, 1997 European *Stars and Stripes*, which described how one soldier doused another with flammable liquid and set him on fire "over an affair one of the soldiers was allegedly having with the other's wife."

Given the tensions which the military's changing composition has unleashed, the miltary's leaders have an essential responsibility to set an example for those they lead. When an officer misbehaves, his or her misconduct reverberates through the ranks below. But the worst crime is for a commander to abuse the trust of those who are mandated to follow. That is what makes cases like the sexual abuse of female trainees by drill sergeants at the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground such a cause for concern.

As the bill of particulars against King George III in the Declaration of Independence makes clear, the Framers of the Constitution were painfully aware of what happens when "good military order and discipline" breaks down. They gave Congress—the "representatives of the people, periodically elected," as Alexander Hamilton put it—primary responsibility for chaining the "dogs of war." Although latter-day Congressmen like Senators Lott and Harkin would loosen those chains in the name of political correctness, they do so at all of our peril.

But, while constant vigilance against threats to "good military order and discipline" is always wise, it is also wise to keep such threats in perspective. As Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General John M. Shalikashvili recently pointed out, "We are 1,400,000 in the active force. The wrongdoing that you hear about is a tiny, tiny fraction, and the vast, vast, vast majority of the men and women find that kind of behavior as abhorrent as you and I do." "Good military order and discipline" is still alive and well. ●

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Tidbits & Outrages

But Mommy, We Went to the Doctor Yesterday

An Ohio physician accused of thrice violating the AMA ruling that patient-doctor sex is unethical insisted the rule did not apply to his case since he had sex, not with his patients, but with their mothers, who had brought them in for their appointments.

The Ivory Fortress

Officials at Cal State University, Los Angeles have decided to arm campus police with Heckler and Koch MP5 semiautomatic submachine guns.

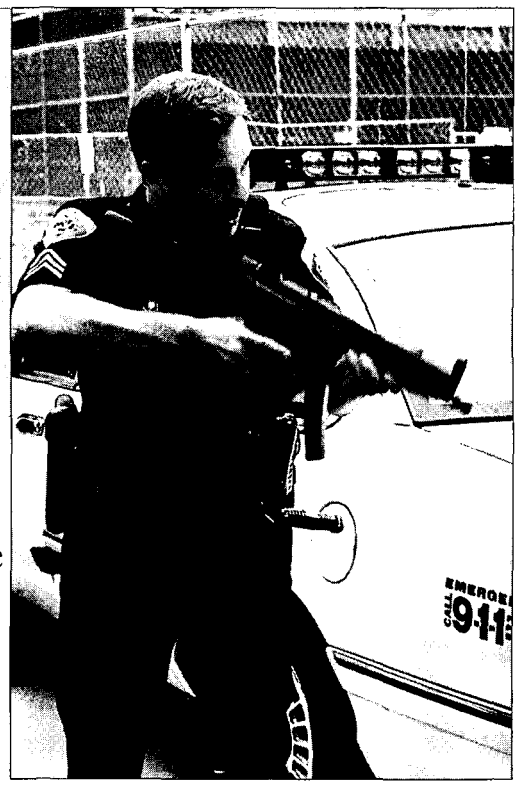

Photo courtesy of Dru Farnham/University Times, Los Angeles

Hi, Mom!

In order to curb the prostitution trade, Kansas City, Mo., has set up "John TV," a local cable channel that features the names and faces of individuals arrested on charges of soliciting sex from prostitutes.

Next time, just pay the ticket

A Memphis, Tenn., resident was arrested when, in court challenging a traffic citation, he raised his hand to be sworn in and a bag of cocaine fell out of his pocket.

Zen Boobism

For $80, women can purchase a breast-enlargement program that, through self-hypnosis, allows users to achieve bigger, firmer, more equally sized breasts. The program's developers claim an 86 percent success rate.

Diamonds, Spades, Clubs, and Heart Attacks

The Las Vegas fire department and medical community are encouraging area casinos to purchase defibrilators to keep in-house because so many tourists suffer coronaries while at the casinos.

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What's Cooking in the Ivory Tower

This year's social science research will surprise both conservatives and liberals

BY NURITH C. AIZENMAN

AS FAR AS SUMMER EVENTS GO, THIS August's annual meeting of the American Political Science Association doesn't have quite the same marquee value as, say, the recent opening of the Disney Store in Times Square. Let's face it, the average academic just doesn't look as good in a toga as Hercules. But make no mistake, the professor is probably the braver of the two. As you read this sentence, not only political scientists, but social scientists from all branches of the field, are boldly slaughtering sacred cows of both the right and the left. Much of their work has far-reaching implications. We took an informal survey of some of the nation's top researchers to determine the most important of this year's findings and came up with plenty of bad news for conservatives—and liberals.

All Hail the Men in Blue

Social scientists are the first to admit the recent nationwide drop in crime has them stumped. "It defies all current theories and predictions. We're just not able to explain it," says RAND crime expert Peter Greenwood. Political leaders are happy to claim the credit, pointing to their recent efforts to put more cops on the street. That's just a feel-good cosmetic fix—and a costly one at that—retort the criminologists. They argue that external forces, like demographic changes, economic improvements, and shifting patterns of drug use play a much bigger role. But without any concrete evidence, who's a voter to believe?

Although he hasn't solved the entire question, University of Chicago economist Steven Levitt has at least hit upon a way to study the police angle. It was a tough nut to crack because of the difficulty of interpreting the relationship between cops and crime. For instance, the presence of a large number of cops in a city with lots of crime could indicate that the cops are ineffective, or it could simply mean that the high crime rate has led the city to hire more cops. Levitt found a clever way around this conundrum by observing that mayors and governors almost always hire more police officers in an election year *regardless* of whether crime is up or down. So by comparing the level of crime before and after election-motivated police increases, he's been able to measure whether those increases have had an impact. His stunning conclusion: Every police officer hired reduces five violent crimes and seven property crimes a year.

But before the "tough-on-crime" politicos start strutting, they should know that not all of their favorite miracle cures are supported by the research. Lock-em-up approaches to drug offenders, for example, are proving highly ineffective. A particularly illuminating study by a RAND research team headed by Jonathan Caulkins analyzed the cost-effectiveness of various crime-fighting strategies and found that, dollar-for-dollar, providing treatment to drug offenders reduces serious crime 10 times more than conventional enforcement techniques (such as arrests, confiscations and short-term jail stays) and 15 times more than long mandatory sentences.

The lesson in all this: Treat drug offenders and carry a night stick.

Cultural Matters

The Cadillac Queen may have dominated the welfare debate in the 1980s, but the 1990s have seen the

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rise of a new leading lady: the teenage mom. Everyone from Charles Murray to Bill Clinton is now convinced that the crux of the welfare problem is the increasing number of young girls having children out of wedlock. There are plenty of statistics to back their claim. For instance, although fewer than 10 percent of families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are headed by teenage mothers, about half of AFDC families are led by women who first gave birth as teens. Clearly a sensible national policy would focus on preventing these near-children from having children of their own. But how to do it?

Before we can answer that, we've got to figure out why so many poor, unmarried teens are having kids in the first place. What is it with these girls? Is there something about not having money that makes them behave irresponsibly? In a fascinating study whose findings surprised even the researcher, University of Chicago Professor Susan E. Mayer found that the key determinant of whether a child drops out of high school and becomes an unwed mother is not her family's income, but her parents' character as demonstrated by their "skills, diligence, honesty, good health, and reliability." In other words, a child whose parents have these traits is almost as likely to graduate from high school and avoid teen pregnancy if she's poor as if she were middle class.

Mayer's findings will frustrate knee-jerk liberals who maintain that the poor are just like the rest of us—all they need is more money. *Au contraire*, discovered Mayer, a long-time liberal herself; many teen welfare moms have fallen into this poverty trap because they were raised by parents with the wrong values. As long as children's most basic material needs for food, shelter, and medical care are taken care of, additional cash has little impact on their life prospects. For example, Mayer's calculations show that even if the income of the poorest 20 percent were doubled, the national teen child-bearing rate would only decrease by 2 percent.

But Mayer's work also contradicts the conservative assumption that poor people are bound to get their act together if you just press them hard enough. Republicans subscribing to this view have introduced provisions in the new welfare law that prohibit states from giving federal block grant money to unmarried underage moms unless they are either in high school, enrolled in a state-approved training program, or have already obtained their diploma or GED. Yet Mayer notes that there's little evidence to suggest the threat of these sanctions alone will make teen moms comply with the new rules. What's needed, she says, are training programs that will teach them new values.

Getting Down to Brass Tacks

Given the obvious importance of training programs for teens, the question that naturally arises is, how well are the existing ones performing? A number of researchers are trying to answer that. And their findings can charitably be described as mixed. Take the four-year evaluation of Ohio's innovative "Learning, Earning, and Parenting" (LEAP) program recently completed by Johannes Bos and Veronica Fellerath of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). LEAP is a statewide program that uses a combination of bonuses like cash benefits, counseling, and help with child care and transportation, along with sanctions like welfare grant reductions, to encourage teenage welfare moms to finish school. Sounds pretty nifty. But the study found that while LEAP increased the school enrollment, employment rates and earnings of mothers who were still in school when they started the program, it had almost no impact on teens who had already dropped out of school. The MDRC also found that despite its other successes, LEAP failed to prevent the teens from having more children, or to boost the graduation rate of even in-school teens. Politicians who blithely promise that "training programs" will prevent people from falling through the cracks of our new, harsher, welfare system need to take note.

Monthly readers will not be surprised to hear that it's possible to have lower than 6 percent unemployment without overheating the economy.

Lest all these dark tidings have you reaching for your Prozac, you'll be glad to learn that there's better news from a home visitation project being studied by researchers at the University of Colorado. The program pairs highly trained nurses with teens who are expecting their first child. The nurses drop by for an hour-and-a-half each week at the start, then gradually reduce the frequency of their visits until the teen's child reaches age two. The nurses train the teens in basic parenting and contraception. But they also focus on helping the teens develop self-confidence, motivation, the abil-

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ity to set goals and plan ahead, and an overall sense of self-sufficiency. At $6,700 per family, the program isn't cheap, but the results are astonishing: An evaluation published this August by a group led by David Olds found that 15 years after they completed the program, mothers were 31 percent less likely to have given birth to a second child. Program participants had also spent 33 percent less time on AFDC. Now the team is preparing to study the program's long-term impact on the children. If Susan Mayer's research is right, the program's success in changing the teen mothers' character should have significantly improved the life prospects of their kids. We'll keep you posted.

You Read It Here First

Orwellian though it may sound, the phrase "natural rate of unemployment" was actually coined by Milton Friedman in 1968. Friedman defined the term as the level of unemployment at which the rate of inflation does not change. When unemployment dips below this natural rate, Friedman explained, employers must compete for the smaller supply of available workers by offering higher wages. Workers spend the extra cash and drive up inflation. When the unemployment rate rises above the natural rate, employers are suddenly inundated with job applicants, enabling them to lower wages and causing inflation to fall. After a spate of studies in the late '60s and early '70s established the natural rate to be 6.0 percent, that figure was etched in stone—and has been revered as a divine constant of economics ever since.

But between 1995 and 1996 a pivotal event forced economists to reconsider: During this period the unemployment rate slipped to well below 6 percent and inflation *dropped*. How to explain this? A few months ago one of the early pioneers of the topic, Professor Robert J.

WHAT'S HOT at the APSA Annual Meeting

On August 27, nearly 6,000 political scientists will converge on Washington for the American Political Science Association's annual meeting. Thousands of papers will be presented. We asked a few of the nation's top political scientists which of them are likely to be most interesting. Their picks:

Theda Skocpol *is professor of government and sociology at Harvard University. Her most recent book, with Stanley B. Greenberg, is* The New Majority: Toward a Popular Progressive Politics.

- "Exit, Voice, and Taxation: The Politics of Funding the Welfare State" by Geoffrey M. Garrett
- Roundtable on "Gender Gap and the 1996 Elections" with Roberta S. Sigel, Kristi Andersen, Susan J. Carroll, William H. Flanigan, Kathleen A. Frankovic, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, and Celinda Lake
- Roundtable on "The Nation-State and Its Exclusions," with Anthony W. Marx, Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow, Pierre Birnbaum, and Claus Offe
- "The Deficit and the Politics of Domestic Reform" by Paul Pierson
- Roundtable on Author Meets Critics: Rogers Smith's *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. Law*
- "Voting in Context: Personal, Media, and Organizational Intermediaries and Political Behavior" by Paul Allen Beck and Russell Dalton
- "Look Who's Talking: Elite Interest Group Dominance of the News" by A. Trevor Thrall
- Panel on The American Literature of Democracy, with papers by Scott Yenor, Peter C. Myers, Thomas S. Engeman, and Charles T. Rubin on novels by James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, and Henry Adams, respectively
- "Fortress Europe or United Colours of Benetton? Dilemmas of European Citizenship" by Seyla Benhabib
- "Racial Polarization and Realignment in the New South" by David I. Lublin and D. Stephen Voss

James D. Fearon, *associate professor of political science at the University of Chicago, is the co-author with David Laitin of "Explaining Inter-ethnic Cooperation," in* American Political Science Review, *December 1996.*

- "Political Coordination and Democratic Stability" by Leonard Wantchekon
- "Strategic Action and Cultural Resources in Baltic Ethnic Politics" by Roger Peterson and John Ginkel
- "Teaching Thucydides: Athens, Sparta, and the Politics of History" by Kurt Taylor Gaubatz
- "Trust No One: Paranoia, Conspiracy Theories, and Alien Invasion" by Judith Grant
- "Female Genital Mutilation and Political Economic Inequality: On the Use of Examples and the Grounds of Social Criticism in Political Theory" by James Johnson and Annabelle Lever
- "Rationality, Social Change, and Social Norms" by Cass Sunstein
- "Pork, Patronage, and Protectionism: How Electoral Systems Affect

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Gordon of Northwestern University, laid out his evidence that the natural rate had actually fallen over time. Also promoting this view is Joseph Stiglitz, formerly Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and now Chief Economist of the World Bank. In a recent paper, Stiglitz estimated that since its peak in the early 1980s, the natural rate dropped 1.5 percentage points.

Why the slide? Stiglitz identifies a number of causes. To start with, increased competition from foreign workers and the declining power of unions have combined to bring down wages. A second reason is that the maturing of baby boomers has increased the proportion of middle-aged people in our population. This is significant because middle-aged folks are generally committed to staying in their current job—so employers don't need to raise wages to hold onto them in times of low unemployment. And any middle-aged workers who *are* inclined to push for higher wages are restrained by the knowledge that they could easily be replaced by the few remaining older people still looking for work—who tend to be aggressive job-hunters. As a result of all these characteristics, middle-aged people are able to sustain much lower levels of unemployment without triggering inflation. The more of them in the labor force, the lower the natural rate of unemployment for the nation as a whole.

Stiglitz has also found intriguing evidence for a third possible cause of the drop in the natural rate, namely, that when the unemployment rate fell and then stayed below the existing natural rate, this caused the natural rate *itself* to move down toward the lower level. If Stiglitz's hypothesis is true, the most likely explanation is that once all those people who had been unemployed were re-hired, they got back into the habit of working. Now when they lose their job, they hunt for the next one more aggressively—making it easier for employers to attract workers without raising wages even when unemployment is low.

Rentseeking," by Ronald Rogowski, Marc Busch, and J. Lawrence Broz
• "A Theory of Media Politics: The Struggle over News Coverage in Presidential Campaigns" by John Zaller
• "When Radicals Succeed: A Rationalist Model of Extremist Violence" by Rupen Cetinyan and Arthur Stein
• "How Do Professional Strategists Think About Voter Decision-Making?" by Alan Gerber

Larry J. Sabato, *professor of government and foreign affairs at the University of Virginia, is the co-author with Glenn R. Simpson of Times Books'* Dirty Little Secrets: The Persistence of Corruption In American Politics.
• "Decision Rules of Major Individual Contributors to Congress: The Importance of Incumbant Committee and Ideology" by Paul S. Herrnson and Lynda Powell
• "The Legislative Connection in Campaign Finance" by Stephen Ansolabehere and James M. Snyder, Jr.
• "Clarence Thomas and the 'Natural Law Thing'" by Scott D. Gerber
• "Campaign Spending by Candidates, Parties, and Independent Groups" by Glenn W. Richardson Jr.
• "Jury Aversion and Voter Registration" by J. Eric Oliver and Raymond E. Wolfinger
• "The Partisan Choice: Bill Clinton or Bob Dole" by Charles E. Smith, Jr., John H. Kessel, and Peter M. Radcliffe
• "Elemental Verities: U.S. State Legislative Sizes and Units of Apportionment, 1700-1930" by Charles A. Kromkowski
• "The Effectiveness of Negative Political Advertisements" by Lee Sigelman, Richard Lau, Caroline Heldman, and Paul R. Babbitt
• "Campaigning, Governing and Presidential Advisory Organizations, 1936-1996" by Matthew Dickinson and Katie Dunn Tenpas
• Panel on Did the Campaign Matter? First Evidence from the 1997 British Election Campaign Study, with papers by Anthony Heath, Roger Jowell, John Curtice, and Pippa Norris

Barry R. Posen, *professor of political science at the Security Studies Program at MIT, is the co-author with Andrew L. Ross of "Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy" in* International Security, *Winter '96-97.*
• "Unpacking Democracy: Presidentialism, Parliamentarianism, and the Democratic Peace Treaty" by Miriam Fendius Elman
• "Integrated Realism and the Logic of U.S. Military Interventions in the Post-Cold War Era" by Benjamin Miller
• "After Victory: Constitutionalism, Commitment, and the Building of Order After Major War" by G. John Ikenberry
• "Democracy and Battle Effectiveness" by Dan Reiter and Allan Stam
• "Come Home America: A Military Strategy for the 21st Century" by Charles Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky
• "War and Social Transformation in Modern Europe" by Sandra Halperin
• "Open Skies and Security Dilemma" by James Marquardt
• "Human Rights Coverage in the Media" by Mark Gibney
• "Realist Theory and the End of the Cold War" by William Wohlforth and Randall Schweller

Research assistance provided by Rachel Pomerance.

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Whatever its causes, the decline of the natural rate is a major development. "There's a tendency by some to look at unemployment numbers as just statistics," Stiglitz notes, "but these are real people without jobs experiencing real suffering. If we can have a society where we have 4.5 versus 6 or 7 percent of the population out of jobs, that is a big thing."

Long time readers of *The Washington Monthly* will not be surprised to hear that it's possible to have lower than 6 percent unemployment without overheating the economy. This magazine has been after the Federal Reserve to aim for lower unemployment since the early 1980s. Why was the Fed so unwilling to experiment? In part because the traditional wisdom held that if they pushed too far and allowed unemployment to fall even slightly below the natural rate, inflation would spiral out of control. To compensate, the Fed would then be forced to drastically increase unemployment—plunging the economy into a recession. But in his second major discovery, Stiglitz found the exact opposite to be true. An error on the side of too little unemployment causes only a slight increase in inflation. What's more, to bring down that inflation you don't have to pull back the reins as much as you had loosened them in the first place. Only a small increase in the unemployment rate will suffice. What do all these findings mean in practical terms? Says Stiglitz, "the evidence very strongly argues for a policy of cautious activism" on the part of the Fed.

I hate to say it, but...We told you so!

The real blow from immigration is delivered to those who can least afford it: poor, low-skilled American workers.

A Moment of Inspiration

Great discoveries often happen in mundane places. Archimedes had his Eureka moment whilst taking a bath. Isaac Newton's revelation was supposedly brought on by the thud of a falling apple. And Harvard Professor Gary King's insight into one of the longest standing unsolved problems in quantitative social science struck him as he sat in an Ohio court room.

The date was November 16, 1994, and King had been listening to expert testimony about whether Ohio's state redistricting plan violated the U.S. Voting Rights Act. To prove their case, the plaintiffs had to show that African Americans in the districts in question consistently voted as a block, did not favor the same candidates as non-black voters, and were being prevented by the majority from electing their picks. The trouble was there were no direct figures about the percentage of blacks in each district who voted for each party—or even about how blacks voted nationwide. That's because there's no good way of collecting this data: It's illegal to sneak a peek into the voting booths, and expensive to conduct precinct-by-precinct surveys. Even if such surveys were done, when it comes to sensitive racial issues they are notoriously unreliable. Of course, social scientists do have some statistics to work with. For instance, they know the percentage of blacks who live in each area as well as the percentage of voters in each area who cast their ballots for each party. The key challenge, then, is to use this type of "aggregate" or "ecological" data to figure out how the subsets overlap. This so-called "ecological inference problem" has turned out to be very tricky to solve.

Since it was first identified in 1919, the ecological inference problem has tormented conservative and liberal researchers alike. It has stymied everyone from epidemiologists trying to determine whether radon exposure causes cancer, to historians wondering which socio-economic classes voted for Hitler. Meanwhile, qualitative political scientists have spent years searching for a way out. Until King came along, the best methods were grossly inaccurate—at times producing results that were downright ridiculous.

Which brings us back to that day in November. Sitting in the court room, King listened in dismay as the expert witness reported that, according to the estimates produced by the most accepted method, in a large number of districts, the proportion of blacks who voted for Democrats was over 100 percent. "That was an absurd moment!" says King. And that's when he had his epiphany. It's pretty technical stuff, but here's a stab at an explanation in English: King realized he should break down the data into the smallest units possible, in this case the precincts composing each district. For each precinct he would determine the range of possible answers—in other words, the smallest and largest number of blacks that could possibly have voted for each party given the precinct's total voting break-down. Then King would narrow that range further by taking into account the voting patterns he'd observed across all the other precincts.

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For instance, if in a particular district he knew that between zero and 80 percent of blacks could have voted Democratic, and he knew that precincts with lots of blacks tend to vote overwhelmingly for Democratic candidates, he could reasonably assume that blacks tend to favor Democrats, and that the percentage of blacks who voted Democratic in the particular district he was analyzing was probably a lot closer to 80 than to zero. (King uses a statistical method to determine just how close—and whether his assumption even applies to the circumstances of that particular precinct—but I won't get into that here.) Finally, King would tally each of the narrow precinct ranges he'd come up with to produce an estimate for how blacks voted in the district as a whole.

With the help of a National Science Foundation grant, King labored "day and night for two years" to refine his new technique. This spring he presented it in a book published by Princeton University Press. King's method has withstood over 17,000 tests and is now being used in numerous court re-districting cases. But the courts were merely the first to appreciate the usefulness of his discovery. After King set up a web page that offers users free software to implement his method, the response confounded his expectations. "I recently came into my office to use my computer and it was so slow I couldn't do anything," he recalls. That's hardly surprising. The last time King checked, his web site was getting 35,000 hits a week.

Alien Invasion?

For years, academics seemed strangely unmoved by the heated immigration debate raging beyond their ivory walls. For once this otherwise fractious community was in near-total agreement: Immigration, went the prevailing wisdom, was good for the economy. Right-wing raving about "those damn fahrners" stealing American jobs was wrong, period. "It was just widely accepted that there wasn't much immigrant impact on wages," explains UC Berkeley Professor David Card. What little research was done on the subject supported this view. A 1990 study by Card, for instance, found that the massive influx of low-skilled Cubans arriving in Miami on the 1980 Mariel boatlift had very little effect on the wages of even the city's low-skilled natives.

At first glance, an excellent—and extremely comprehensive—400-page study of immigration released this past May by the National Academy of Sciences looked like just another confirmation of the general consensus. Most news accounts played up the study's finding that, on balance, immigrants add up to $10 billion a year to the economy (largely by providing cheap labor that lowers the cost of goods and services). That $10 billion figure sounds impressive—until you compare it to our $8 trillion GNP. What's more, the study found that, at least for the first 23 years after their arrival, immigrants actually cost the government more in public services than they give back in taxes. In other words, native taxpayers are picking up the slack. But the real blow from immigration is delivered to those who can least afford it: poor, low-skilled American workers. This is largely because, since the mid-1960s, the immigrants arriving in the United States have been progressively less educated. By increasing the supply of low-skilled workers in the country, immigrants drive down wages for everyone in this group.

But what about that 1990 Card study showing a negligible impact on the wages of low-skilled workers? Three economists have a bold new explanation. Harvard's Lawrence Katz, George Borjas, and Richard Freeman (all of whom were also co-authors of the National Academy of Sciences study) argue that to measure the impact of immigration you have to examine its effects on low-skilled workers not just in the city where immigrants live, but in the nation as a whole. That's because the competition from low-skilled immigrants flooding into cities like Miami forces the city's low-skilled natives to move to cities with fewer immigrants, like Atlanta. But that means Atlanta now has a larger supply of low-skilled workers than it would have had otherwise. As a result, wages in Atlanta are driven down, even if wages in Miami (which has the same number of low-skilled workers as it would have had without immigration) stay the same. Using this approach, Borjas, Freeman, and Katz determined that between 1979 and 1995, immigration has caused the average hourly wage of American high school dropouts to fall by about 4.5 percent.

Borjas et al's reasoning is supported by data gathered by University of Michigan demographer William Frey. But David Card says *his* data doesn't match Frey's, and he's skeptical of Borjas et al's argument. And so the controversy rages on.

The jury may still be out on questions ranging from the impact of immigration to the benefits of welfare reform, but one thing is already certain: Neither liberals nor conservatives can rely on today's social science research to provide automatic support of their views. ●

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Who's Who

By Susan Threadgill

Susan Carpenter-McMillan, the new spokesperson for **Paula Corbin Jones**, quickly captured the press's attention when she said, "I love **Mary Matalin**. I don't know what she sees in [**James Carville**]. He must be great in bed." Carpenter-McMillan is described by **Frank J. Murray** of *The Washington Times* as "a Los Angeles legend for her crusades, ranging from her advocacy of castration of child molesters to preventing singles and homosexuals from adopting children."

OMB Director **Frank Raines** is said to be at the top of **Bill Clinton**'s list of potential successors to **Erskine Bowles** as White House Chief of Staff. He has **Al Gore**'s support. And Clinton is said to like the idea of being the first president to appoint a black chief of staff. Raines plays golf so he'll also be able to replace Bowles as the president's partner. In fact, he played a trial round with Bowles and the president in late July.

If Raines takes the reins, life on the links should prove particularly chummy in coming months since Raines (like so many people in this town) reportedly owes a debt of gratitude for professional advice to the president's other favorite golfing buddy, superlawyer **Vernon Jordan**.

The mediators who have been able to engineer the occasional truces in the feud between Senators **Fred Thompson** and **John Glenn** are their colleagues **Arlen Spector** and **Carl Levin**, who bridge their own political differences with a partnership on the squash court.

Speaking of Bowles, his chief of staff, **Victoria Radd**, is being moved from her small office in the West Wing to far grander quarters in the Old Executive Office Building. Sounds like a move up, doesn't it? But maybe it's not. Most White House veterans say that even a closet in the West Wing, which is where the Oval Office is located, is considered preferable to a suite of offices anywhere else.

If you had to guess the hottest foreign policy issue in Washington, we bet you wouldn't choose the lifting of U.S. restrictions on aid to Azerbaijan. You might not even have known, as we have to confess we did not, that such restrictions existed. They were enacted by Congress in 1992 to protest Azerbaijan's blockade of Armenia. The reason they're a hot issue today is a $4 trillion oil field that is suspected to lie under the Caspian Sea region. American companies, eager to share in the potential loot, are lobbying to have the restrictions lifted so they can get government loans and other help. They have enlisted an All-Star team of heavy-lifters including a former secretary of state, **James A. Baker III**; a former secretary of the treasury, **Lloyd Bentsen**; a former secretary of defense, **Richard Cheney**; a former White House chief of staff, **John Sununu**; and two former national security advisers, **Zbigniew Brzezinski** and **Brent Scowcroft**. We, of course, assume that these luminaries are motivated primarily by their continuing desire to advance American interests abroad. Money may also have a tad to do with it. Scowcroft for example was paid $100,000 for his efforts in 1996 alone, according to **David B. Ottaway** and **Dan Morgan** of *The Washington Post*, who also note: "Adding a sense of intrigue, former Maj. Gen. **Richard Secord**, chief covert operative for **Oliver L. North** in the Iran-Contra scandal, reportedly has been sighted in Baku."

Bill Clinton may have more millionaires in his administration than any president since **Calvin Coolidge**. **Robert Rubin**, **Erskine Bowles**, and **Franklin Raines** are the wealthiest. Other millionaires include **Janet Yellen**, **Richard Riley**, **Andrew Cuomo**, **Charlene Barshefsky**, **William Daley**, **Bruce Babbitt**, and **Madeleine Albright**.

Shattered Faith by **Sheila Rauch Kennedy**, the former wife of Rep. **Joseph Kennedy**, doesn't offer the juicy family scandals that some of us naughty-minded had hoped for. It does provide some facts we didn't know about the practice of annulment in the Catholic Church. She says the United States is the "Nevada of the annulment world" with three-fourths of all Catholic annulments granted to Americans. Did you know it costs $300 to file for an

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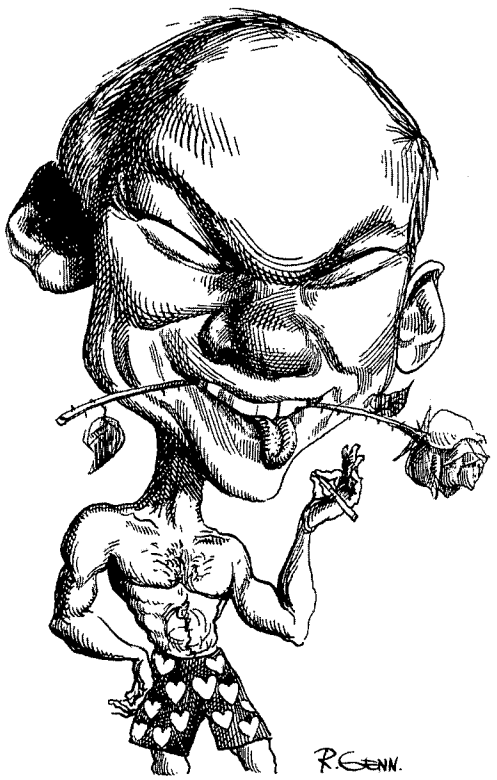
annulment but $850 to file an appeal to resanctify your marriage?

Two telephones outside the offices of House Minority Leader **Richard Gephardt** have been traditionally reserved for the use of White House lobbyists. But such is the tension between the new Democrats serving **Bill Clinton** and **Al Gore**, and the old Democrats around Gephardt, Gore's most likely opponent for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2000, that, according to *The Hill*'s **Eamon Javers**, a Gephardt staffer angered by aggressive White House lobbying on a spending bill opposed by the House Minority Leader, yanked out the plugs of the two phones.

The secret of **Marion Barry**'s performance as mayor of Washington may have been revealed by **Dwight Cropp**, a former Barry assistant who is now a professor of public administration at George Washington University. Cropp says about the mayor's standards of personnel selection: "I don't think that competence at this point in the game is a determining factor. I think that loyalty and the ability to function as a team player outweighs competence."

New Jersey voters, and Republicans around the country, who first hailed Gov. **Christine Todd Whitman** for cutting taxes, are having second thoughts. It seems that, to make up for the loss of revenue, local taxes are having to be raised in order to preserve popular public services.

Who among her staff members has the most influence on Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright**? Insiders say its her press person, **Jamie Rubin**.



Rubin is blamed for the initially awkward handling of the revelations about Albright's Jewish ancestry. But doesn't that mean that he should also get the credit for at least some of Albright's many public relations successes?

Who will be the next Supreme Court Justice to resign? The smart betting is on **Sandra Day O'Connor**, who has had health problems in recent years. Her replacement could be **George Mitchell** or **Mario Cuomo**. **Bruce Babbitt**, who was on the president's short list, may have removed himself by infuriating Senate Judiciary Chairman **Orrin Hatch**, with what Hatch regarded as the Interior Department's grab of the Escalante-Staircase National Monument in Utah.

Chris Conway and **Josh Goldstein** of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* have dug up a speech **Al Gore** delivered on the Senate floor in 1989 denouncing the "disgrace" of the **Bush** administration's awarding of ambassadorships as political plums. He proposed that political appointees be limited to 15 percent of the total number of ambassadors. At that time 25 percent of the Bush ambassadors were political. Today, the figure for the Clinton-Gore administration is 31 percent.

Washington can seem crazy at times, but we're comforted by the knowledge that it's always crazier out in Hollywood. Consider the piece of exotica from lala-land recounted not by some irreputable gossip, but by **Bernard Weinraub** of *The New York Times*: "A studio executive told me of a phone call he had just had from [**Michael Ovitz**] about a circus film—which was mercifully never made—starring **Dustin Hoffman** as a clown. Mr. Ovitz had told the executive, with obvious embarrasment, that the star was now insisting that the clown character have sex with a midget."

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Where Are the Good Guys When We Need Them?

While the public interest groups fiddle, campaign finance reform burns

BY MICHELLE COTTLE

MEMBERS OF THE CLINTON administration boast that their boss has done more to promote the cause of campaign finance reform than any president in recent history. Perhaps. But staffers who point to Clinton's use of the bully pulpit as evidence of his reform commitment mistake his real contribution: the fantastic fund-raising scandal now on display in room 216 of the Hart Senate Office Building. Here, beneath the watchful gazes of Sen. Fred Thompson and Co., witnesses relate hair-raising tales of convoluted financial shell-games rigged to funnel vast sums of special interest money into the coffers of our major political parties—and that's just the legal stuff.

Indeed, we may well owe this country's First Fund-raiser a debt of gratitude. History suggests that, with an issue as dear to Congress members' hearts—and careers—as campaign finance, it takes a good old-fashioned scandal to get the ball rolling. And despite the media's decree that the Senate hearings are too boring for TV, the partisan bickering and finger-pointing that flavor the proceedings have kept the campaign finance issue in the daily papers.

The investigation also has politicians both past and present coming forward to decry the existing system. In late July, former Presidents Bush, Carter, and Ford jointly issued a public plea for congressional action on campaign reform. Former political luminaries Walter Mondale and Nancy Kassebaum-Baker have been stumping around the country since March, drumming up public support for the issue. Meanwhile, back on the Hill, more than 70 campaign finance bills have been introduced as legislators rush to appear on the virtuous side of the debate. Foremost among these reformers are Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Russ Feingold (D-Wisc.). Hoping to take advantage of the scandal and its resultant buzz, the two veteran crusaders for reform have vowed to bring their long-debated bill to the floor this month. President Clinton has issued a statement of "strong support" for the senators' efforts.

Clearly, now is the moment for campaign finance reform supporters to join forces, sound the trumpets, and storm, not only the Hill, but also every congressional office in the country. However, those listening for the distant footfall of the troops are likely to be disappointed. Administration insiders say the noises they hear emanating from the activist community sound more like discordant babbling than a coordinated roar for reform.

"At this point, I don't see much happening from the public interest groups," confirms Leonard Weiss, Democratic staff director for the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. "They seem slightly invisible. I just don't see their effectiveness, and it really pains me. I want them to be effective."

Correction. This country *needs* them to be effective. Campaign finance reform may be the defining public interest issue of our time. Even assuming there was no insidious Chinese plot to buy U.S. political influence, the antics of Charlie Trie, the Young Brothers, and John Huang add flesh to the bones of what we suspected all along: Rather than devoting their time—and the tax dollars that pay their salaries—to saving Medicare or Social Security, our elected offi-

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cials spend their days dialing for dollars. (A process, it seems, that now requires knowledge of the international calling codes for Jakarta, Beijing, and Hong Kong.) And whether the funds are foreign or domestic, designed to snag a morning cup of coffee with Bill Clinton or an afternoon of bill-drafting with Tom DeLay, the real scandal remains the same: The American public is getting ripped off thanks to a campaign system that bestows enormous influence upon moneyed special interests, while turning our national leaders into high-class panhandlers. What's more, as the fund-raising frenzy escalates, an increasing number of talented men and women, recognizing that perpetual begging is no way to spend a career, are opting out of public service, ceding the field to candidates whose primary talent is money-grubbing. When liquidity becomes the primary qualification for elected leadership—when Michael Huffington, Ross Perot, and Steve Forbes can become serious contenders for national office—one can only echo that sage former Senate majority leader, presidential contender, and fund-raiser *extraordinaire*, Bob Dole: Where is the outrage?

Excellent question. With the coming battle on the Hill, why aren't legislators under siege from the likes of Public Citizen, Public Campaign, Citizen Action, U.S. PIRG (Public Interest Research Group), and, the granddaddy of them all, Common Cause? If the public is, as reform opponents claim, suffering from political malaise or resigned disgust, the public interest community should be laboring nonstop to get John Q. Public mobilized for the fight. Why then are we seeing so little coordinated action from the people who have made this type of crusade their life's work?

Those involved with the campaign reform movement say the answer lies with the activists themselves. While passionate about reforming the system, the groups are hindered in their effort to fight the good fight by a number of internal factors: tactical errors, general disorganization, and a liberal dose of plain old infighting.

The result: "Campaign finance reform is a long shot this year," predicts Weiss. "I just don't think people on the Hill are feeling pressure to act."

Out of Touch

For more than a quarter century, the not-for-profit advocacy group Common Cause has been synonymous with campaign finance reform. With 250,000 members nationwide and offices in almost every state, Common Cause considers itself the standard bearer for campaign reform. "We have 100 volunteers who come into our offices, we have 40 interns this summer, and what these people do is organize members by phone," says Common Cause President Ann McBride. "We are the quintessential grass-roots organization."

Unfortunately, most of Common Cause's grass seeds have been sown inside the Beltway. David Bollier, an independent consultant commissioned in 1995 by Ralph Nader's chief of staff, John Richard, to report on the state of the campaign finance reform movement, says the group's grass-roots presence is more "façade" than fact. "Many Common Cause chapters are closing down, consolidating—many are one- or two-person offices without a lot of troops behind them," says Bollier.

Over the last couple of years, Common Cause has moved to reallocate resources to the more populous states, cutting funds to offices in smaller states and putting them on what one state director calls "a starvation diet." Among the states to suffer cuts is Kentucky, home to the Senate's No. 1 campaign finance reform enemy, Republican Mitch McConnell (not to mention the state's seven other congressional representatives, who could also stand a bit of goading). Common Cause Kentucky Chairman Richard Beliles notes that the $7,000 his chapter now receives from national headquarters is just enough to pay for the group's bare-bones office.

Common Cause Kentucky's part-time executive director, Ivonne Rovira, has made it clear that she considers the national office's redistribution decision a serious mistake. "What they have effectively done is incredibly lowered their profile in 20-some states," Rovira told *The National Journal* in an April 1 article. "And membership and money follow media attention."

Rovira is not the only state affiliate feeling abandoned. "The efforts taking place in the smaller states are underappreciated—including by the national Common Cause office," says another part-time director who asked not to be identified. "Taking funding away from us was a really bad mistake, because until recently when California passed its bill, all of the reform progress being made at the state level was happening in small states."

Some state directors question whether their achievements are even of interest to their "out of touch" Washington counterparts, noting that reform bills passed in their legislatures have received little press attention or credit from the national office. "It's like they don't care," says our self-described "makeshift" director.

Sadly, despite its shortcomings, Common Cause

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may be our best hope for achieving national reform in this Congress. Citizen Action and Public Campaign have given up on Congress passing reform this time around and are focusing on state efforts. U.S. PIRG, meanwhile, plans to spend the fall engaged in what Democracy Campaign Director Derek Cressman calls "defensive lobbying" (i.e., fighting against any "bad" reform bills that come up for consideration). As for Ralph Nader's Public Citizen: "Their campaign reform efforts almost don't even count," says one Washington researcher with ties to the public interest community. "They are pathetic—to describe them as moribund is far too generous."

"Despite a brave front," concludes David Bollier, "there is a lot of disorganization and a lack of clarity within the movement."

The picture painted by the activist groups themselves is, not surprisingly, quite different. Becky Cain, president of the League of Women Voters, notes that her organization is sponsoring citizen caucuses around the country and will be running a 20-state ad campaign in the fall.

Similarly, Bob Schiff, the staff attorney at Public Citizen, says that although his group doesn't have chapters outside of Washington, its members work in coalition with local groups such as environmental and religious organizations. "We held a series of press conferences during the Memorial Day recess, and we send materials out to people on our lists of groups."

But the fear is that this scattershot approach doesn't provide the groups with the grass-roots firepower—or the big funding—needed to move their agenda. "They keep huffing and puffing and issuing press releases," says Bollier, "but they haven't organized the people to make congressional representatives feel the pain. What reformers need is a surgical, we're-going-to-make-McConnell-pay approach."

Chuck Lewis, head of the research group The Center for Public Integrity, agrees. Although careful to point out what a tough job campaign reform activists face, Lewis thinks the state infrastructure is lacking. "Most reform efforts have been inside the Beltway. They've played an inside game strategy, which means the public has not been educated on the issues."

"I just don't think people on the Hill are feeling pressure to act," says one congressional staffer.

Like Bollier, Lewis sees the need for coordinated operations in all 50 states, with activists holding individual members of Congress accountable to constituents. "No one is holding up votes and saying, 'See, this person is voting against this.' We need to be bringing this home to the community so members know there's pressure building at home for them to deal with us. Somebody needs to put it in their faces. They hear it in the media, but it is almost all on a national level."

As Ivonne Rovira told *National Journal*, "Let's face it, Mitch McConnell doesn't give a damn if there are nasty stories about him every day in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. He's worried about what *The Lexington Herald Leader* and the *Courier Journal* in Louisville say about him. Now, if they were on his butt every day, that would be very different."

Ann McBride points to the local and national press garnered by Project Independence, a nationwide petition effort by 65,000 Common Cause volunteers (and a handful of professional organizers) to collect 1,776,000 signatures in support of campaign finance reform. What McBride does not mention is that the group's original goal was to have these signatures ready by the July 4 deadline that President Clinton set for Congress to pass a comprehensive campaign finance reform bill. Officially launched in late March, Project Independence got off to a roaring start—500,000 names as of early June—only to fizzle, coming about as close to meeting its July 4 deadline as did Congress. The group's modified plans are to try to get the number of signatures up to 1 million in time for a September presentation to Congress.

Certainly, even 500,000 signatures are nothing to sneeze at. But after all the fanfare and advanced publicity, Project Independence's failure to meet its objective sends one of two messages to Congress: 1) The public is precisely as apathetic about campaign finance as reform opponents claim, or 2) Common Cause is too disorganized to meet a self-established—albeit ambitious—goal for collecting signatures, much less pose a serious political threat to legislators who don't champion reform. Either way, for Congress members desperate to convince themselves

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and their constituents that campaign reform isn't a major issue, the petition drive's tepid results are a license for inaction.

When asked about other grass-roots efforts Common Cause is spearheading for September, Jennifer Lamson, the group's vice-president for grass-roots lobbying, says Project Independence is pretty much it. However, in some states, it doesn't appear that affiliates are being seriously mobilized to join the national battle. Common Cause members in Arizona, Kentucky, and Nebraska—while very active in their local reform efforts—seem to have little information about or interest in the national office's push for McCain-Feingold. Frances Mendenhall, part-time executive director of Common Cause Nebraska, says she recently received an e-mail from the national office announcing that the McCain-Feingold bill would be brought to the floor in September, but she admits, "I'm not a good source on the topic. Naturally I hope for the best, but I haven't read up on the issue."

A House Divided

Before the public interest groups can join forces to put serious political heat on Congress, they'll have to overcome yet another key obstacle: infighting. Far from being united in their common pursuit, the major activist groups have pursued their diverse agendas, leading to what Bollier calls the "balkanization" of the activist community.

As our disillusioned Washington researcher puts it: "One reason we won't win reform is that these groups all work together so badly. When you talk to them, they tell you how hard it is to get reform passed. Yes. But the untold story is that they don't work together. A lot of money is raised and spent, but it's not well spent because all of the organizations pursue their own little fiefdoms and never work together."

Some of the differences are ideological, with individual groups adhering to their own vision of reform and pushing policy proposals tailor-made to fit this vision: Common Cause and Public Citizen have long backed McCain-Feingold, in all its many incarnations. U.S. PIRG backs the tougher spending and contribution limits in the proposal co-sponsored by Sens. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), as well as the senators' call for a constitutional amendment overturning *Buckley v. Valeo*. The League of Women Voters recently launched a $1 million ad campaign in support of the Ornstein-Mann proposal for incremental reform, while Public Campaign and Citizen Action want full public financing for elections as outlined in the Kerry-Wellstone bill. (For a summary of the major reform proposals, see sidebar.)

With an issue as complex as campaign finance reform, some philosophical differences are to be expected. But the toll such battles take on the activist community cannot be ignored. Take, for example, the reform fight in California's last election, in which Common Cause and CalPIRG each championed its pet ballot initiative. (See "The Battle of the White Hats," December 1996). After a stunning display of internecine squabbling, complete with television attack ads, Common Cause emerged victorious. But

The Line-Up

McCain-Feingold. The best known of the campaign finance reform proposals, Sen. John McCain and Sen. Russ Feingold's bill would ban soft money contributions and institute stricter disclosure guidelines for independent issue expenditures. PAC contribution levels would be lowered and candidates would be encouraged to observe voluntary spending limits through incentives such as discount postage rates and a "variable contribution limit," which would double the legal donation limits to candidates who agree to curtail spending.

Ornstein-Mann. Co-authored by a quartet of academics and policy wonks, including Norman J. Ornstein of The American Enterprise Institute and Thomas E. Mann of The Brookings Institution, this proposal would end soft money, stiffen party disclosure requirements, provide free TV time for federal candidates, and establish tax credits for small contributions from individuals. The outlined reform does not address PAC contributions but would raise individual donation limits.

Kerry-Wellstone. Based on the "clean money-clean elections" legislation passed in Maine last November, this plan, co-sponsored by Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.), would provide public financing and free TV time to candidates who abide by voluntary spending limits.

Doolittle. Aptly named, this proposal by California Republican Rep. John Doolittle would repeal all restrictions on both spending and contributions, and require full electronic disclosure of donations within 24 hours of receipt.

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most observers considered the battle an absurd waste of time, energy, and good will, undermining what had previously been a solid working relationship between the two organizations. Unfortunately, insiders say the factionalism of the California campaign is a microcosm of what's going on nationally.

In Nebraska, for example, Frances Mendenhall notes that, although Common Cause and the state's League of Women Voters have been trying to forge a working relationship for quite some time, things never seem to pan out. "They consider us too radical." Similarly, says Mendenhall, efforts to team up with the remains of Ross Perot's United We Stand presence in the state "kind of got us in trouble because their goals are not a perfect match with ours."

Such battles also ultimately drag down the larger movement. "The California initiative should not have been as rancorous as it was, leaving bitterness behind," says Bollier. "It should have succeeded with the groups standing shoulder to shoulder and ready to move that energy on to Washington."

Instead, a similar confrontation is shaping up on the national level. Common Cause's Project Independence is pushing specifically for the McCain-Feingold bill. However, U.S. PIRG's Derek Cressman says his group plans to actively lobby *against* McCain-Feingold unless the legislation undergoes significant changes.

As the reform debate rages on, minor coalitions between the groups form and break and reform. The organizations' energies (and funds), however, are ultimately being split among the numerous bills and proposals, saving reform opponents the effort of having to divide and conquer the public interest crusaders themselves.

Of course, not all of the discord stems from complex policy disagreements. "A lot of it has to do with personalities, with the activist elite not getting along," says Bollier. "Some of this is based on arcane history going back five years on this or that legislative battle. These people's egos and organizational agendas get bruised or derailed, and when that's your life's work, you don't just brush it off."

The public interest groups are hindered by tactical errors, general disorganization, and plain old-fashioned infighting.

"There are no institutional bonds between these groups. There are no personal bonds," confirms an inside source. "All of these people hate one another."

For veteran reformers who have been laboring long and hard, hotshot newcomers can prove a threat not only to the old guard's pride, but also to its political support and funding. For Common Cause, which does not accept foundation or PAC money, the primary battle is for membership fees and public donations. For many other "good government" groups, however, the financial struggle includes scratching and clawing for a share of the limited pool of foundation dollars. There are only a handful of foundations that fund this cause, notes a former staff member of Public Citizen. "The competition for grants is vicious."

Right now, the new kid on the block—and the one in everyone's cross hairs—is Public Campaign. Headed by Ellen Miller, a 12-year veteran of the Center for Responsive Politics research group, Public Campaign is focused on total public financing for elections. As groups like Common Cause pinch pennies, Public Campaign finds itself awash in dough from such notable patrons as George Soros, whose foundation has already awarded the group $3 million in grants. But with Miller focusing on state-based reform (and expressing staunch opposition to McCain-Feingold), it is unlikely that a dime of Public Campaign's windfall will go toward lobbying Congress this fall.

Just as her organization treads on the toes of more established groups, Miller personally has been known to ruffle some feathers. More than a few people in the activist community made mention of her abrasive manner—hardly conducive to coalition building. "She's one of the most tactically inept people around," says a source familiar with Miller's work. "She's got her elbows flying all over the place trying to crowd out everyone else."

Outspoken and unflinchingly direct, Miller is clear about what she perceives as the flaws of past reform efforts. "The difficulty in the last two decades is that it's been such an inside game. It's been a discussion held between Dupont Circle [where Com-

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mon Cause's and Public Citizen's offices are located] and Capitol Hill. We're trying to get beyond that."

Whether Miller will serve to energize the movement remains to be seen; however, her effect on the tenuous relationship between the reform groups is already apparent.

The Bottom Line

With the legislative showdown over campaign finance reform looming, are the groups making an effort to table their differences? Bollier says he hasn't kept a close watch on the public interest community in recent months, "But from what I've heard and seen, there hasn't been much change."

Some reform watchers are more optimistic. The Brookings Institution's Thomas Mann, co-author of the Ornstein-Mann proposal, says he senses an emerging consensus, and Center for Responsive Politics Executive Director Kent Cooper says he sees "a little loosening to previous hard-line stances." Senator McCain too notes that Common Cause "has gone from the view that we had to have all of McCain-Feingold or nothing, to being willing to make some progress now and more later."

Still, talking with even the most politic organization leaders, you hear numerous remarks along the lines of "this campaign is primarily ours," or "other groups will come around to a more achievable agenda," or that a particular group is nice "but not really focused on action." And almost no organization could, when asked, come up with an example of effective programs or activities being independently pursued by another activist group. Hardly a promising sign of an emerging coalition.

Of course, some folks think the activists' squabbling and disorganization don't matter, because campaign finance reform ultimately won't be driven by a public outcry. Len Weiss predicts it will take congressional challengers making reform a '98 campaign issue before anything really starts to move. And former *Washington Post* columnist Paul Taylor, another co-author of Ornstein-Mann, predicts that reform "will come from more of a Hill thing than from public pressure." Even the League's Becky Cain says, "I don't know if we'll ever have people storming the gates on this issue. Will we see them marching on Washington to get it? I doubt it."

But if reform advocates seriously hope to achieve real reform this Congress—or any Congress for that matter—they cannot afford to write the public off as a lost cause. The forces allied against reform are too well-organized and well-funded for the public interest community to allow its fragmented efforts and personal agendas to divide it. Political heavy hitters ranging from the ACLU and the NEA to the NRA and the Christian Coalition all oppose reform—and all have nice big budgets with which to express their commitment to the status quo. (In Kentucky alone, notes Richard Beliles, state anti-reform interests spent some $7 million on lobbying efforts last legislature.)

"A lot of the problem has to do with personalities," says one inside source, "with the activist elite not getting along."

Whatever the individual and institutional differences among the public interest groups, they are missing an important opportunity to work together and exert targeted, coordinated pressure on the true enemy: legislators who oppose reform, including those who claim to support it while working quietly to undermine the cause. If the groups can agree on nothing else, it should be to systematically torment any legislator who fails to stand up for campaign finance reform at this crucial time. (And by "stand up," I mean really work to build a reform coalition in Congress, not just grandstand for the cameras.) The key to change is public pressure—not a crusading president or a "reform friendly" Congress. After all, even the most reform-minded candidates often experience a change of heart upon taking office and realizing that they've joined the ranks of the incumbents, for whom the current system works so well.

Besides, as Senator McCain points out, with the scandal in the news and all of the big talk by Clinton and Congress about reform, if a substantive bill doesn't get passed this time around, public cynicism about our "do nothing" legislators will skyrocket. Apathy will spread. And our elected leaders will continue to wander the streets with their tin cups, endlessly searching for their next sugar daddy. ●

Research assistance provided by Seth Meisels.

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Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of a Good Beer

How the ADA has turned alcoholism into a right

BY WALTER OLSON

ON MARCH 9, 1990, NORTHWEST pilot Norman Lyle Prouse saw, as he later put it, "the end of my career ahead of me." The previous evening, an anonymous tipster had called the local Federal Aviation Administration office to report that Prouse and his crew were tossing back drink after drink at the Speak Easy lounge in Fargo, Minnesota—even though they were scheduled to fly a plane to Minneapolis at 6:30 the following morning. The FAA's "bottle-to-throttle" rule prohibits drinking within eight hours of take-off, so when they arrived at the airport, the men were met by an FAA inspector. The inspector was concerned by their bloodshot eyes and alcoholic breath—not to mention the deep gash on Prouse's forehead. But the inspector mistakenly believed he lacked the authority to stop the crew from flying the plane, a Boeing 727 with 58 passengers on board. Prouse took off in sleet and rain and landed in Minneapolis three hours later without incident. There the crew was met by more investigators who conducted blood tests. The crew swore they had had only a few drinks the night before and left the bar by 8:30 at the latest. But lab tests proved otherwise. Prouse had a blood level of .13 percent—higher than both the FAA's .04 limit for pilots and the .10 level Minnesota uses to define drunk driving. It turned out that Prouse had not left the bar until 11:30, by which time he had knocked off between 15 and 19 rum and cokes and fallen off his chair and cut his head. Prouse, you see, was an alcoholic.

Adapted from The Excuse Factory *by* WALTER K. OLSON. *Copyright © 1997 by Walter Olson. Reprinted with permission of The Free Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.*

Prouse immediately entered rehab and hired a lawyer. The aviation press was incensed at the many rationalizations offered in Prouse's defense—particularly the argument that, after all, he had landed the plane safely. They had a point. After all, the true test of safety in the air is not whether you can manage the long boring stretches, but whether you're ready for the unexpected. The judge was equally unimpressed with Prouse's arguments and sentenced him to more than a year in prison.

But Prouse's pessimism about his career prospects proved unwarranted. That's because the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects alcoholics who enter rehab. Although Northwest could have tried to take shelter under an exception, it chose to bow to the spirit of the law. Northwest rehired Prouse as soon as he was released from jail. And in July 1995 the company quietly confirmed that Prouse had returned to flying passenger jets.

The First Sip

How, exactly, did alcoholism emerge as a protected category in the American workplace, akin to race, sex, or religion? The most powerful force pushing in that direction has been the rise of the disability-rights movement, which culminated in Congress's near-unanimous passage of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. But the story is in fact more complicated. Long before ADA or its predecessor statute in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 came along, managers in civil service systems were finding it a headache to handle employees who hit the sauce. The same was often true for private-industry managers who dealt with powerful labor unions. In both cases, the reigning principle of tenure—that workers, once

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ensconced in their jobs, should not have to worry about losing their jobs unless they engaged in truly lurid misconduct—had gone far to entrench alcoholic workers against removal for poor performance, absenteeism, or attitude problems.

Modern civil service procedures and the arbitration systems commonly found in unionized workplaces afford a striking degree of protection to the worker with a drinking problem. One crucial premise commonly adopted is that management must prove a case for removing a worker. And impairment on the job, however plausibly suspected, can be hard to prove to an arbitrator's satisfaction: reports of erratic behavior may be subjective, finding liquor in a desk does not prove the worker drank any of it, and so forth. Moreover, it is widely accepted in both civil service and union arbitration settings that management has no right to take into account misconduct that takes place off the job. Thus, indicators that commonly signal a problem, such as a cluster of DWI arrests, may be excluded from consideration. "This was completely unrelated to his job," said a lawyer for another veteran Northwest pilot picked up on the road (not before a flight) with a blood alcohol level of .33; a judge said it was amazing the pilot could walk at all.

Even if management can prove alcohol-related misconduct, it is only one step toward winning a right to remove a worker from his post. Arbitrators tend to demand that management have demonstrated its willingness to work with the employee by offering second, third, and nth chances. One arbitrator, summarizing his colleagues' view, observes that before a company may fire a worker for alcoholism-linked misconduct it must have encouraged him to seek treatment; if he agrees, only "fail[ure] to make substantial progress over a considerable period of time" could justify termination. Arbitrators seldom uphold dismissal for job-related liquor abuse. And a study of workers reinstated by arbitrators after alcohol abuse found that only a quarter of them improved their performance after reinstatement.

The Alcoholic's Bill of Rights

But it took the rise of the disability movement to make "alcoholics' rights" seem like something other than a satirist's slogan. "Certain classes of disability, including drug abuse, alcoholism, and mental illness, have frequently been misunderstood and viewed in a negative light," laments the author of a 1989 academic history of handicap-rights law. Now, of course, all that has changed, and it is a staple of the disabled-rights literature to deny differences between the various frailties of body, mind, and character. "A professional with a mental disability is legally no different than a blue-collar worker with a serious back injury," declares ADA drafter Christopher Bell. Why, after all, should trouble controlling impulses be seen as different from trouble carrying packages? Why should an inability to maintain sobriety or a rational flow of thought be seen as different from an inability to reach a high shelf?

These views acquired the force of law when, at the behest of congressional staff, Congress adopted Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which in vague language guarantees disabled persons equal access to federal programs and to the activities of federal contractors. The power to enforce the provision was soon taken up by the highly activist Office of Civil Rights within the then Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The OCR staff racked up one victory after another in these early years in interpreting the new statute expansively so as to impel the widest and most expensive range of "accommodations" for disabled persons. One of their notable successes was to establish that alcoholics and drug users should be legally treated as disabled, just as if they were people missing their sight or legs. The idea reportedly drew consternation when it reached the desks of then-cabinet secretary Patricia Harris and President Jimmy Carter, but it was too late to turn back: Staff attorneys had established the rule as part of the agency's practice, and the precedent was set.

Soon civil service managers were being required to provide even more obliging accommodation of alcoholic employees. The process could be observed in a remarkable series of cases in the courts and before the federal government's in-house Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). The board got things rolling with a ruling ordering the General Services Administration to reinstate an alcoholic guard found sleeping on the job. To "afford reasonable accommodation to an employee who is handicapped by alcoholism," an agency would have to offer him therapy with sick leave before it could discipline him for related misconduct. Moreover, the offer had to be a formal one. GSA had told the guard at an earlier disciplinary hearing that help was available if he wanted it, but the MSPB did not find this pointed enough. Such a formal offer must be made "before [rather than simultaneously with] initiating any disciplinary action for continuing performance or misconduct problems related to his alcoholism."

The next turn of the screw came in the 1984 case

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The
Washington Monthly
Journalism Award

JUNE 1997

JOHN HECHINGER AND JOHN REINAN

Gambling Grabs S.C.

The Charlotte Observer

With more than 24,000 video poker machines lining the walls of almost every bar, gas station, and gambling hall in the state, South Carolina has become the land of unregulated gambling. Hechinger and Reinan investigate how a handful of video poker machine owners has influenced state legislation, sidestepped state rules on gambling payouts, evaded taxes, and become a billion-dollar industry.

BOB MERCER

Quality of Streams

Rapid City (S.D.) Journal

In a comprehensive three-part series, Mercer exposes efforts by South Dakota's Department of Environment and Natural Resources to conspire with area gold mining interests to lower water quality standards on trout fishing streams in the state's Black Hills. Claiming it posed no serious threat to aquatic wildlife, state regulators and mining officials argued for increasing allowances of heavy metals in the streams, an act the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said would certainly harm key aquatic species. Revealing the faulty data underlying DENR's claim, Mercer's reporting helped prevent special interests from poisoning the area's streams.

of *Whitlock v. Donovan.* Judge Gerhard Gesell of the federal court in Washington ruled that not only must employees be given a chance at rehab, but one chance will hardly be enough. After all, "relapse is predictable in treatment of alcoholics." A 1985 case added the final horse to the merry-go-round. Once a worker agreed to enter rehab, the agency would have to wipe the slate clean of offenses, since "reasonable accommodation of an alcoholic employee requires forgiveness of his past alcohol-induced misconduct." Given the right to relapse, this might have to happen again and again.

During the public campaign for the ADA, which was meant to extend the principles of the Rehabilitation Act to private industry, supporters tried to assure employers that they would not have to go quite as far in accommodating the disabled as the federal government had. But before long it became clear that the ADA's coverage of alcoholism and analogous afflictions would have all sorts of implications for the private workplace—unleashing a series of eyebrow-raising legal actions. ADA spawned successful lawsuits to bar medical boards and other licensing authorities from asking applicants about their alcohol, drug, and mental-health histories—even though a high share of misconduct by doctors is linked to substance abuse and even though many such boards use disclosure of past problems simply as a way to make sure an applicant is offered extra help, explain an otherwise inexplicable pattern of complaints or violations, and aid in catching recurrences early.

In Hamden, Conn., school superintendent David Shaw used the ADA to turn his misconduct into a money-making venture. Picked up twice by the police for drunk driving, Shaw had pleaded guilty and got off with a fine and license suspension. When it became clear the press would report embarrassing details of the second arrest—he'd been picked up leaving a pornographic bookstore, dressed in what appeared in a police photo to be women's clothing—he proceeded to flee the state "without his Prozac," as the *Hartford Courant* put it, and made himself unreachable for about two weeks in the thick of the school year. Then, says school board chairman DeWitt Jones, "he came back [into town] with a gun-slinging lawyer to browbeat us." Shaw entered rehab and sued the board for trying to fire him, charging, among other things, that they had failed to treat his alcoholism as a disability. Two months later town officials settled, paying Shaw a reported $240,000. Explains the town's attorney, "Termination would have been difficult because of the ADA."

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Proceed With Caution

The havoc wrought by alcoholism in the workplace has never been in doubt. Many abusers are relatively good at maintaining job performance for long periods—at best a mixed blessing, since it can result in a higher level of damage when they finally do spin out of control. Unlike the problems of, say, simple incompetence or bad character (which typically either are there or are not), alcoholic misconduct and serious mental disturbance tend to come and go, with plenty of ambiguous behavior, spectacular flameouts followed by vows to reform, more backsliding, and imaginative rationalization through second, third, and fourth chances.

There is no reason to think these will necessarily be upheld by federal courts as grounds for dismissing a worker. "[E]rrors in judgment, aggressive behavior, insubordinate behavior, inability to get along with coworkers, absenteeism, [or] a quick temper [may] constitute notice to an employer that an employee has a mental disability," notes attorney Margaret Hart Edwards in the *Employee Relations Law Journal.* EEOC guidelines say employers must expect covered workers to fall short on such dimensions as "thinking, concentrating, and interacting with other people."

And so the handling of suspected tipplers on staff has emerged as one of the trickier ADA areas. One newsletter advises employers to see a lawyer before taking "any adverse employment action against suspected alcoholic employees"; publish a policy, as on sexual harassment; train employees how to recognize alcoholism, one early case having hit a big company with punitive damages for failing to do so; and allow the employee a full measure of paid and unpaid leave. On the giving of time off, the indicated course is to emulate the Ontario arbitrators who ordered the city of Toronto to give Emmerson Phillips sick pay, rather than making him take a vacation day, after a hangover kept him out of work one Monday. ("It's not just a day's pay," he told the *Toronto Star.* "It's the principle. ... I was sick and they should have believed my story that I was sick.") One court applying Section 504 proposed that if an employer would have allowed a worker a set number of leave days to recover from a heart attack, it should give him the same number for an alcoholic binge.

Especially vexing for the employer is the question of when, whether, and how to confront a suspected abuser. Courts had already ruled that the federal government as an employer had a positive duty to confront. Thus a court awarded $150,000 to Clarence Ferguson, saying the National Marine Fisheries Service

JULY 1997

THOMAS E. RICKS

The Widening Gap Between the Military and Society

Atlantic Monthly

Enumerating the changes that have taken place in the military and society at large in the past few decades, Ricks identifies a troubling gulf between soldiers and civilians that has resulted in an increasingly alienated, politically conservative, and misunderstood military. From reinstating the draft to involving professional and middle class Americans in all aspects of public life—but especially the military—Ricks recommends a series of measures Americans should take to ensure we have a democratic military that supports, rather than undercuts, effective U.S. foreign policy.

MICHAEL POWELL

D.C. Government Series

The Washington Post

In this long-overdue report on the sad state of finances in its hometown, The Washington Post *shows how poor management and Mayor Marion Barry's penchant for handing out jobs and contracts to establish a power base have undermined services and cost the District hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Powell follows the trail of mismanaged funds—including an $89 million federal grant for AIDS and tuberculosis patients that went unspent even as the city's tuberculosis cases increased by 36 percent, as well as details about the city's excessive and ineffective spending on services and employees (the highest per capita in the country). And by comparing D.C. to other major cities, Powell shows that the capital is not impoverished for lack of money. The real problem is gross mismanagement at all levels of the government.*

THE MONTHLY JOURNALISM AWARD is presented each month to one or more newspaper, magazine, radio, or television stories (or series of stories) that demonstrate a commitment to the public interest. We are particularly interested in reporting that explains the successes and failures of government agencies at all levels and of other institutions such as the media, corporations, unions, and foundations that contribute to the existence or solution of public problems. Please send nominations (including a copy of the article or broadcast text) to The Washington Monthly Journalism Award, 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009. Nominations for stories run in August are due September 1.

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should have called him on the carpet about his pint-of-gin-a-day habit. Ferguson missed 389 days of work between 1980 and 1983, but the agency said it had never been sure what his problem was: Co-workers testified that he hadn't smelled of booze, slurred words, or been caught sneaking drinks.

Of course, if employers do lead glazed-looking workers into the personnel office and pull out a breathalyzer, they set themselves up for suits over privacy invasion, defamation, and similar outrages. In a 1988 case, an employer confronted a worker who'd been performing poorly and whose wife had expressed concern about his drinking, only to be hit with $100,000 punitive damages when it turned out his problem was depression rather than booze.

Thus it seems necessary for firms to address problems without identifying them, hinting heavily, and getting their meaning across through the use of significant pauses, like a fine stage actor. Managers should "not even ... mention drinking, let alone diagnose alcoholism," warns *Business Week*. The goal, says the McNair law firm's South Carolina employment newsletter, is to "help the employee unilaterally realize his problem," and yet "if possible, confine any alcohol-related discussions to the employee's job performance." The MSPB, in reinstating the snoozing guard, tied itself in verbal knots trying to explain how this could be done. A supervisor "need not confront him with the ... belief that the employee has a drinking problem," yet "must make the employee aware in general terms that the supervisor suspects the employee has a problem affecting his performance or conduct, and that the supervisor recommends that the employee participate in a particular rehabilitation or counseling program which is available to him."

One court proposed that if an employer would have allowed a worker a set number of leave days to recover from a heart attack, it should give him the same number for an alcoholic binge.

Much rehab wisdom holds that the most effective jolt in getting an addict to go straight is to threaten his job. The new law serves to postpone that threat. Many also suspect that clients who enter rehab strategically—as a condition of a suspended sentence, for example—do less well than highly motivated volunteers convinced that their lives, marriages, or jobs are truly at risk.

Courts and many others show great faith in the idea of rehabilitation, yet its success rates are painfully modest. Even the most widely admired programs have high relapse rates, and most first-timers appear to backslide no matter which program they enter. What happens then? The employer wins the right to begin the laborious process of documentation again and to negotiate the same legal shoals over the timing and content of the next confrontation. *A Berkeley Journal of Employment and Labor Law* article takes a pessimistic (from the employer's point of view) line. It predicts that, despite the seemingly limiting clauses in ADA about the right to hold alcoholics to prevailing work standards, "judges may adopt the Whitlock analysis," with its right to relapse, as being consistent with the law's "spirit."

Of course, when besotted employees hurt themselves or others, their employers will be expected to pay. In this country's most notorious environmental disaster of recent times, the Exxon Corp. allowed a captain who it knew had a history of alcoholism to command a tanker, accepting his story that his problems were behind him. The Exxon Valdez proceeded to run aground in Alaska's Prince William Sound, causing one of history's worst oil spills. After a lawyer charged that the company had taken a "callous, cold-hearted business risk," an Alaska jury responded by hitting the company with $5 billion in punitive damages.

Meanwhile, in other courtrooms lawyers were suing Exxon on behalf of workers with drinking pasts whom the company had taken off safety-sensitive positions. By the mid-1990s at least 100 challenges to the company's substance abuse policies had been filed, with dozens of cases pending. Lawyers citing language in an employee handbook, which they said should be read as contractually binding, had already won one big verdict for an officer in Portland, Maine, whom Exxon had transferred with no cut in pay. "Public perception of the Valdez incident as having been caused by a recovering alcoholic," declared a Department of Labor judge in 1992, "does not justify discrimination against all recovering alcoholics."

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Memo *of the* Month

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July 3, 1997

Memorandum for Chris Orestis
Director of External Affairs

From: **Jay Morgan** Jm

Subj: **Georgia/Gingrich Project**

Per our agreement, I am reporting to you that Congressman Mac Collins, a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, talked with Speaker Gingrich today and asked him to hold the House Ways and Means position on Medigap in conference committee. The Speaker assured Collins that is his intention and he appreciated Collins support in that effort.

We consider this a premium contact and message delivery effort and hope that you will be pleased. Please contact me if you have any questions or if there are other actions you would like me to take in this regard.

Thanks for your confidence in our ability to assist you.

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The SAT Meritocracy

Is it based on real merit?

By Nicholas Lemann

Several years ago in these pages, I reviewed a book by E. Digby Baltzell, the sociologist of the American elite (he invented the term WASP), and heartily endorsed Baltzell's observation that the old American "Protestant Establishment" (another term Baltzell invented) had been replaced by a new "SAT meritocracy." I suggested that the rise of the latter group would make a good book of its own.

Since then, Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray have published *The Bell Curve*, which makes claims for the triumph of the SAT meritocracy that make Baltzell's seem super-cautious, and I have been working on my own book about the history of the American meritocracy. I hope the book, besides laying out what actually happened, will set off a discussion of meritocracy's strengths and weaknesses.

The word "meritocracy" was invented in 1958 by a British sociologist and Labour Party policy wonk named Michael Young, in a strange, compelling little book of soc-sci-fi called *The Rise of the Meritocracy*. It is essential to understand that Young invented the word in order to condemn it, and that he wrote the book to persuade liberals to abandon their commitment to the idea of universal, individual equal opportunity. The more this goal is realized, Young thought, the more deeply stratified society will become; and, if success and failure have been derived through a fair competition, the left will be deprived of a rhetoric with which to attack the real problem, inequality itself. Instead of equal opportunity, liberals should promote equality (what conservatives call "equality of result") as the overarching goal.

In Britain, the Labour Party, although it has now abandoned the goal of equality of result, was founded as explicitly socialist; for it to embrace equal opportunity represented a shift to the right. In America, however, equal opportunity has almost always been the banner under which liberal progress has been achieved and by no stretch of the imagination represents a retreat from higher principles. Second, although Michael Young invented the word meritocracy, the essential idea of a classless society in which one's station is a product of one's effort is an old one in America, much older than it is in Britain. Young's notion that the choice is between a rigid class system run by a hereditary aristocracy and a ruthless meritocracy generating vast inequality doesn't resonate here because there are other alternatives within our historical memory.

But Michael Young does exert a certain grip on the mind.

America is a huge country with a much less unified culture than you'd think from reading the national press and watching television. The SAT meritocracy is best understood as a distinct, even smallish American subculture—but one that has had enormous influence on society as a whole. The operative idea in the American meritocratic subculture is that in the bad old days (roughly, before the Second World War) the country had slid into being the next thing to a hereditary aristocracy like England. Everything worth running was run by Baltzell's Protestant Establishment. Members of inconvenient ethnic groups—hell, anybody who had not been educated at a New England boarding school—wasn't allowed to play. And the favored few had no quality that looked to an outsider like merit.

Believing that the country needed to become strikingly more meritocratic after World War II, a group of prominent educators led by the president of Harvard, James Bryant Conant, set up a system of national testing to discover the meritorious (defining merit as high IQ and good grades in school), get them to elite universities, and put them on course to

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take over the jobs that had been reserved for Episcopalians. These included parts of the government (the Foreign Service, Cabinet members, and many of their top aides, but not the civil service), tenured faculty positions at Ivy League universities, investment banking, high-end academic research, medicine, and corporate law firms.

For those who have prospered under the Conant system, the idea that it is a perfect meritocracy, and the only meritocratic part of America, is extremely powerful. It is what you grow up on. The meritocratic race begins as early as the age of three (when you take the standardized intelligence test for admission to nursery school), and from then on life is a series of ruthless educational selections, reaching an emotional crescendo with application to college and graduate school. At every step, after you make the cut, your existence becomes a little more rarefied, your contact with everybody else more restricted, and the message that you are superior more explicit. All this only increases your nervousness about the horrifying possibility of being cast out into the general pool if you fail to make the next cut.

Although the word meritocracy isn't in regular use outside the mandarin subculture, the idea of it is widely accepted almost everywhere in America. Career military officers, farmers, shopkeepers, entrepreneurs, corporate salarymen—all of them believe that in their world, success is a function of merit, not family background or connections. What distinguishes the official, self-conscious, mandarin meritocracy is the use of the education system to judge merit. The meritocratic machinery was set up by professional educators who truly, deeply believed that there is a total overlap between merit and educational merit—that there is no talent the education system doesn't catch. They were, on the one hand, deeply offended by the undeserved lock that the Protestant Establishment had, and, on the other, certain that the unorganized marketplace could not function meritocratically because it was not systematic enough. The perfect solution to both problems was to reform and expand the education system so that it became essentially the personnel office, the central opportunity provider, of the United States. As one crucial early report by the meritocracy-builders put it, "the democracy of the campus is finer than that of the street."

So in order to think clearly about how well the American meritocracy works today, it is necessary to uncouple some ideas that have gotten so firmly linked in our minds that we've forgotten that they don't necessarily go together. A meritocracy does not have to be based on educational selection. All opportunity does not have to flow through the education system. That our meritocracy works as it does is the result of decisions we've made about how to structure the society. Were these the right decisions? How have they worked out? Those are the questions we should be asking about the meritocracy. More specifically: Does it reward merit in all its forms, or only one kind of merit? Does it provide genuine equal opportunity to all, or only to those who are so situated as to perform well in school?

Taking a Second Look

Let's divide the evaluation into two parts, elite and mass.

If you are in, or within range of, the mandarin elite, it can be difficult to get enough perspective to see the essential point: the original mission, to find high-IQ young people and put them on a track, has been successfully completed. From within the system, there is a powerful tendency to focus on its imperfections. How many hours have you spent in conversations about the unfairness of someone's having gotten an undeserved elite berth in the mandarinate? It takes up an enormous amount of psychological space when someone you knew had to go to Cornell instead of Brown because of an affirmative action or alumni-child admit; your strong natural inclination is to think that any deviation from neutral equal opportunity to attend an elite institution is a betrayal of the ideal of equal opportunity for all Americans. But that obscures the true situation, which is that America does a fabulous job of providing the academically outstanding with first-class university education. We are the most IQ-tested and -sorted country in the world, and we are also the country in which it is easiest to get into a first-rate university. The problem of wastage of those high in academic intelligence is not a big problem in America today.

The real problem for the meritocratic elite today is something different. According to the original design, the American meritocracy was supposed to function like Plato's Republic: the best students would be found and given elaborate special training, and then would become the Guardians, revered leaders of society whose activity was running the State. The American meritocratic mandarins haven't followed this script. They are selected and trained, yes, but then they don't do with their lives what they were supposed to. And rather than being treated by the rest of the society as a natural leadership group, they are unpopular. In political-science terms, they're an elite that lacks legitimacy.

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The mandarins were supposed to become technocrat-statesmen who would operate a complicated new national applied-research apparatus and provide policy and administrative expertise to government. As the system actually works, only a few do what they were supposed to do in the public sector. The standard function of the mandarins is to act as high-level and well-paid providers of advice and expertise to business: corporate lawyers, investment bankers, management consultants. They are very good at what they do—the whole world seeks their services—but they are too obviously self-interested to have an automatic high moral standing with the public.

Americans admire rich people who have gone out and started something new, but most of the mandarins are too risk-averse for entrepreneurship. Being devoted primarily to the public good would also win them admiration, but most of the mandarins don't have that quality either. Specifically, a decision made very early in the development of the system—to defer the brainy from front-line military service—has disastrously undercut the mandarins' ability to function as the acknowledged leaders or the society. Rather than being revered, the mandarins, under names like "the cultural elite," have become a group that one can make political hay by attacking.

People who don't have talents that show up on a transcript are disadvantaged unfairly if the transcript is made the gateway to all the good roles in society.

On the mass-opportunity side, the American meritocracy has done a much less good job than it has with the task of elite selection. Providing opportunity to all is a much bigger job than selecting and training a small elite, and opportunity was never the main goal of the people who set up the system anyway. Remember that in 1950, only a bare majority of Americans finished high school, and in the rest of the advanced world an eighth grade education was the norm. The country was (and still is) deeply attached to the idea that public education should be provided by small towns, not the national government. To find a way of guaranteeing education to all at a national quality standard appeared nearly insuperable 50 years ago. The feeling was, let's get the new elite selected and in place and set up a big education machine, and we'll address the problem of educational opportunity for all later. This hasn't happened. Instead, over the last half-century the triumph of the SAT meritocracy has made education essential to individual success—alternative routes have been closed off—yet a substantial minority of American public schools are still of unacceptably poor quality. It's impossible to assert with a straight face that children who attend these schools have the same chance in life as everybody else.

There is a further difficulty: to use an education system, even a perfect one, as the national personnel department is fairer than having an explicitly hereditary aristocracy, but not ideally fair. First, it locks in too narrow a definition of merit. People who don't have talents that are going to show up on a transcript are disadvantaged unfairly if the transcript is made the gateway to all the good roles in society. Second, education is too front-end loaded. People interact with the education system, for the most part, during the time of life when they are still living with their parents; the idea that making decisions about people based on their educational performance somehow neutralizes the background they were born into is a fantasy. It is necessarily, again, to pull yourself forcibly out of grip of the automatic assumptions of the mandarin culture to see that a doctor's kid from Georgetown who upon graduation from Sidwell Friends gets into Harvard is not someone whose success is wholly a matter of personal effort in an open competition. To construct society so that as many permanent decisions as possible are made by the time people are 22 is to come perilously into range of being an aristocratic system.

The Next Step

What should we do now about meritocracy in the United States? It's a big, complicated subject that I'll deal with here by proposing guiding principles, rather than detailed policies.

Principle Number One: Equal opportunity should still be a central, animating, liberal idea. We should recognize that the day of universal equal opportunity is still a long way off and work hard to bring it nearer. We should also recognize that when it arrives, it will not wipe out all economic inequities.

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Principle Number Two: Inequality is more acceptable if it is earned, and temporary. The worst kind of inequality is the explicitly inherited kind. Next-worst, though, is the kind that the meritocratic machinery generates, where you are virtually guaranteed a lifetime berth at the top of the income distribution not for actually doing anything, but for getting outstandingly good grades in school. Rewards for true performance—winning the election, directing the hit movie, starting the successful business—are morally preferable to rewards for merely demonstrating potential by being a good student. That is why they are much less resented. Also, true high performance is almost always sporadic; winners don't get the lifetime lock, but experience ups and downs over time (with the downs giving other people a chance to be winners, and the former winners a lesson in empathy). Inequality is better when it is not the result of a permanent irrevocable grant of high status.

Principle Number Three: If the meritocratic mandarins want to function as national leaders, rather than as business advisors, they must make a greater contribution to and become more personally involved with the rest of the society. Mandarins almost never serve in the military, usually live in isolation from the mainstream, and are often too busy to devote time to community and volunteer activities outside of their careers. They tend to make enough money to live very well, but not enough to be free of having to think about money at all. All that isn't the worst of it; the worst of it is that mandarins spend their lives being given special handling in a rarefied environment made up of other people like themselves. This produces a strange mix of arrogance (from being told you're superior so often), insecurity (because the possibility of being put back into the general pool, without the validation of being surrounded by other certified overachievers, is profoundly unfamiliar and scary), and lack of a natural feeling for what life is like outside the compound. A better connection to the rest of society can be forced upon the mandarins, through national service requirements and the like, or it can be adopted by them voluntarily, but if it is not forged one way or another they will become more peripheral in American life.

Principle Number Four: The main purpose of education, especially public education, should be not to select, sort, and order the population, but to equip everyone with as many skills and as much learning as possible. The meritocratic race ought to begin, not end, on graduation day. The main purpose of the education system ought to be opportunity provision, not elite selection.

This last principle sounds simple and commonsensical when stated baldly, but it is actually the most radical of the four, because if carried out it would deeply subvert the structure of the mandarinate. I find that when I try it out on members of the mandarin class, I get a "You've lost your mind" look in return. We are all so deeply socialized into the system by now that it's initially hard to imagine how you'd select people for key roles in the society if not through educational competition. (The answer is, to the greatest extent possible, through performance in apprenticeships, and on the job, and through recognition of important qualities that tests can't measure, such as courage, character, wisdom, judgment, compassion, and creativity.) And—the deeper, darker problem—there is an unstated, powerful feeling that for the better sort of people to be educated amidst ordinary people would be deadening, even dangerous. Back in 1961 John Gardner, who as head of the Carnegie Corporation was one of the key builders of the American meritocracy, published a book called *Excellence* in which he agonized (for about five seconds) over the possible unfairness of using the education system to close down life options for most Americans, and then magnanimously acknowledged that we ought to wait "until as late as 18 or 19 years of age" before making final decisions, to give the late bloomers a chance. By now it is ingrained in mandarin culture that any other approach would be madness, rank and dangerous utopianism. To unlock the grip of this not fully acknowledged idea on the minds of the mandarins (and on the structure of the society) will be a huge project.

Let me make a few stipulations about the idea of education for opportunity, not selection.

I am not advocating dumbing down the school system. The reason for people to go to school is to learn, not to be patted on the head. Schools whose students can't meet a standard are no good. But, on the other hand, the goal is to engender as much learning by as many people as possible, not to maintain high standards for the few best students and warehouse everybody else.

I am not advocating reforming schools with an eye to having them continue to be selective in their essential purpose, but with a modified set of winners. There is a tendency among liberals to want to twist the dials of the meritocracy so as to produce a more diverse, more humane educational elite, via affirmative action and a host of other means. Some of these ideas are good, some aren't. Here I don't want to go

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through them one by one, but instead to say that the main goal is not to alter the appearance of the education-derived elite, but to avoid having an education-derived elite at all, except in those cases where the elite role is one that truly requires selection by education, like a classics professor. (And even he should be subjected to performance tests.)

Finally, carrying out this program will require imposing a much greater degree of centralized, national control upon public education—an idea that currently is not in the acceptable range of the spectrum. The United States has by far the most decentralized education system in the advanced world. When it works, that isn't a problem, but when it doesn't work, a higher authority should step in and set a guaranteed minimum level of quality. If the local school board is producing an acceptable educational result—literate, numerate students—then it should be left alone. If it isn't, authority over the school should keep moving one rung up the ladder, from district to city to state to the federal government, until the school becomes decent. This is already happening in many places (Chicago, New York City, New Jersey), except for the final step of federal takeover in the event of continued failure. Despite all the rhetoric about its incompetence, the federal government does many things well, and nothing as poorly as the way in which the worst American public schools are run.

What I'm proposing here is not an unattainably enormous project. The number of unacceptable public schools is limited. Getting them up to grade is well within the range of possibility. The overall principle is not a radical one either. We have made a society where people who don't have a decent basic education are consigned to life at the bottom. We have long since committed ourselves to providing everyone with the promise of a decent basic education at public expense. Now it's just a matter of truly delivering on the promise—which becomes a more pressing cause the fewer options there are for people without education. If the idea of using education primarily to teach the many rather than to anoint the few seems loony to you, you should ask yourself a couple of uncomfortable questions: Do you feel that way because you've got such a good deal the way things are now? Have you unconsciously absorbed the idea that the great mass of Americans are people on whom a real education would be wasted? ●

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Addicted to Mobutu

Why America can't learn from its foreign policy mistakes

BY STEPHEN R. WEISSMAN

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY'S 37-YEAR investment in the Congo (formerly known as Zaire) has just gone bust. Notwithstanding some $1.5 billion in direct U.S. aid—and billions more in U.S.-subsidized Export-Import Bank, World Bank, and United Nations assistance—President Mobutu Sese Seko's "pro-Western" government melted away before Laurent Kabila's advancing rebels. Few observers mourned Mobutu's passing. During his three decades in power, Mobutu enriched himself and his cronies while impoverishing his people; turned Zaire's military into a rabble effective only in preying upon and repressing civilians; and earned the lasting contempt of the majority of important African leaders. His regime's fatal gambit was an association with exiled Hutu militants from neighboring Rwanda. These *genocidaires* had exterminated hundreds of thousands of minority Tutsi and were using Zaire as a base to return to power. In response, persecuted Zairean Tutsi, aided by the governments of Rwanda and Uganda, formed the core of a multiethnic and multinational alliance that finally drove Mobutu from the country. Now, after passing up countless opportunities to press for democratic reforms and wasting billions of dollars to support Mobutu's morally bankrupt regime, the United States confronts the legacy of its policy: Zaire's economy is in shambles, the genocidal Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and Burundi has spilled across its borders, and the country is now ruled by a military-based regime whose commitment to democracy and human rights is unclear and over whom—thanks to our long passivity in the face of rising anti-Mobutu sentiment—the United States has limited influence.

Sadly, Zaire is only the latest example of a structural defect in U.S. diplomacy, one that we have witnessed in such disparate places as the Shah's Iran, Somoza's Nicaragua, Marcos's Philippines, Botha's South Africa, and arguably Yeltsin's Russia. Time and again, the U.S. foreign policy establishment has supported friendly authoritarian leaders, however flawed, based on the assumption that its clients represent the "only" feasible pro-Western political alternative. As in domestic affairs, political elites and bureaucracies cling to outmoded ideologies and old organizational commitments long after their wisdom has been called into question. But in foreign policy this tendency is even more pronounced, since the counterbalance of congressional and public accountability is relatively weak. Perhaps if we can understand how our policy went wrong in the Congo, we can begin to take meaningful action to prevent such costly fiascos in the future.

The Devil Known

Washington's long affair with Mobutu has its origins in the circumstances of the dictator's rise to power. Throughout the early 1960s the Congo was wracked by violent conflict—the product of an ill-prepared transition to independence, divisive foreign interventions, and Cold War politics. To end the factional feuding, in 1965 U.S.- and Western-supported forces drove back rebel followers of former Zairean Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba, and the CIA orchestrated a military coup by Mobutu. From this experience, the American foreign policy establishment drew a critical, but flawed conclusion: If Mobutu goes, Zaire falls apart. Even as the actual evidence rendered this assumption increasingly implausible, throughout four presidential administrations—

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Republican and Democrat alike—the "Mobutu or chaos" formula remained a bedrock of American foreign policy in Zaire. "Over the years it had become a truism," says Ambassador Herman Cohen, who was involved in formulating this policy for the better part of 25 years, most recently as Assistant Secretary of State for Africa under President Bush. Although the idea that a single man stands indefinitely between his nation and chaos is transparently absurd, it drew credibility in Zaire's case thanks to repeated assertions by American officials and their reflection in the press.

I had an opportunity to observe this phenomenon firsthand when I traveled with a bipartisan congressional delegation to Zaire's capital city of Kinshasa in August 1983. Our request to meet with ex-parliamentarians who were negotiating with Mobutu's regime for more political space was greeted with joy by embassy officers who had been prohibited by Ambassador Peter Constable from contacting the opposition. Following our meeting, however, Mobutu's security forces brutally beat the ex-parliamentarians in front of our hotel (and Rep. Mickey Leland), destroyed their cars, and threw them into a cell in the president's compound. When our group decided to file a written protest and boycott a lunch meeting with Mobutu on his yacht on the Congo River, Ambassador Constable urged us to protest less vigorously and reinstate the luncheon. (In the end, we compromised by boarding the yacht but declining to eat, prompting the diplomatic Mobutu to ply us with hors d'oeuvres and pineapple juice "from [his] own farm.") As we left Kinshasa, Ambassador Constable boarded our plane and vainly urged the members of Congress to write each of the opposition leaders to explain that their concern for the leaders' welfare did not extend to support for their political activities.

What made Ambassador Constable's timid posture so tragic was that it occurred at a time when the United States possessed significant leverage to promote meaningful reform in Zaire. Several years before, in 1977 and 1978, rebellions in the Shaba province had nearly provoked Mobutu's overthrow, presenting the perfect—but squandered—opportunity for an internationally brokered political transition. During the early 1980s, as Mobutu's regime tried to recover from these rebellions, every major political actor in Zaire perceived the United States as the premier international player because of our history of involvement and our leadership of the Western alliance. In addition, although American direct aid to Zaire was relatively modest at the time, the United States was the critical force behind the continued flow of massive IMF and World Bank resources, time and again overcoming the resistance of worried technocrats. At the very least, a stronger U.S. stance against Mobutu could have saved the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars, weakened Mobutu economically, publicly disassociated the United States from the corrupt regime, and encouraged Mobutu's many opponents.

Heads in the Sand

By the time the well-traveled George Bush became president, he had known his Zairean counterpart for many years. A close political relationship was now suffused with mutually pronounced ties of friendship. But notwithstanding Bush's affinity for Mobutu, change was in the air. Congress was moving to cut off aid, and when Secretary of State James Baker visited Mobutu in early 1990, he urged him to join the world-wide wave of democratization. By the end of 1991, the situation appeared to be reaching critical mass. The United States, Belgium, and the World Bank had halted assistance to Zaire, Mobutu's regime was under siege by a powerful, though unarmed and fractious, democracy movement, and a major army mutiny had resulted in the dispatch of French and Belgian troops to evacuate foreign citizens. Assistant Secretary of State Cohen convened a National Security Council panel that unaminously concluded that as long as Mobutu remained in power, Zaire's situation would continue to deteriorate. Possible U.S. policy responses were to be discussed at the next meeting. But the assistant secretary quickly found himself on the carpet before Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. According to Cohen:

> Eagleburger said he was unhappy about the report [of the meeting]. I said it was unanimous. He said, "Yeah, but we shouldn't be selling this as a basis for policy because our feeling is that you don't get rid of someone until you know who will replace him and then you're responsible for him. I don't want to hear anymore of this and don't propagate it. I don't want to get involved in it."

Although Eagleburger was prudent in warning about the dangers of pushing out Mobutu before considering his probable replacement, the undersecretary's refusal to countenance even contemplation of an alternative policy left the United States saddled with the dictator in the face of growing "chaos."

Despite the United States' passivity, Zairean opposition groups garnered enough popular support to force

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Mobutu into a "Sovereign National Conference" to prepare a democratic transition. In August 1992, Cohen helped negotiate a compromise between Mobutu and opposition Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi (one of the beaten ex-parliamentarians) providing for a pre-election transitional period during which Mobutu would largely reign rather than rule. Not surprisingly, the Zairean leader quickly reneged on his commitments. Nevertheless, according to Cohen, Eagleburger restrained him from calling for Mobutu's resignation.

When Bill Clinton arrived in office, the fallacy of the "Mobutu or chaos" argument had become too obvious for some foreign policy officials to ignore. Yet even those who no longer subscribed to the old strategy were unable to come up with a new approach. As a result, the United States hesitated to pressure Mobutu into resuming the democratization process. In 1993 the Clinton administration imposed a ban on visas for the Mobutu clan, but it quickly dropped a more ambitious proposal to freeze the dictator's foreign assets when the Belgian and French governments proved reluctant. Other proposals that were tabled but not adopted included expanded public diplomacy, sanctions against Air Zaire, and increased efforts to gain Western and African cooperation.

Part of the problem, wrote J. Stephen Morrison, then with the U.S. Agency for International Development, was that the U.S., Belgium, and France "feared that a sudden forced departure by Mobutu might send Zaire spiraling into crisis." (Ironically, observed Morrison, this situation had already arrived under Mobutu, as weakened "controls over the military" led to "repeated instances of mutiny, rampage, looting," and regional ethnic violence that "resulted in the forced displacement of more than 750,000 people.") In addition, many policy makers simply could no longer imagine Zaire without Mobutu, and had convinced themselves they lacked the leverage to move him very far. In 1994, the Clinton administration sanctioned the Mobutu-packed parliament's designation of Mobutu's former Prime Minister, the corrupt but competent Kengo wa Dondo, as the new "opposition" head of a transitional government. Later the United States backed Kengo's plans for "free elections" although it was obvious to most observers that the conditions for such elections were overwhelmingly absent.

By the end of 1996, Zaire's tax revenues had dropped to as little as $160 million, one-tenth of what they had been a decade before. In January of this year the U.S. once again had a golden opportunity to assist a broad-based democratic transition in Zaire. Dismissing the conventional "Mobutu or chaos" wisdom, a group of non-government experts participating in a State Department-U.S. Institute of Peace conference concluded that "despite concerns that centrifugal tendencies in Zaire will result in the 'Balkanization' of the country ... this is not imminent." Rebel leader Laurent Kabila's forces, meanwhile, had picked up steam but could not yet be sure they would prevail. Had the United States chosen to use its diplomatic and economic influence with Kabila and his African allies at this stage, it would have had maximum leverage in supporting a new democratic government. (In fact, leading Africa specialists and humanitarian organizations recommended such a course in March.)

Once again, however, the United States missed its chance. In early February, as Kabila's forces advanced towards Zaire's largest cities, the high-level National Security Council Deputies Committee pondered U.S. policy. But according to a participant, a proposal to help ease Mobutu out, as the U.S. had done with President Marcos in the Philipines, was shot down in part on the grounds that there was "nothing there under Mobutu." Even by mid-March, with the major city of Kisangani about to fall, American policy barely budged. As city after city tumbled to the rebellion, the administration remained reluctant to directly call for Mobutu's departure. That did not happen until Ambassador Bill Richardson arrived in Kinshasa barely two weeks ahead of Kabila's troops.

Déjà Vu

The events in Zaire are all the more disheartening because we have seen variations of this scenario played out countless times before. Writing about Iran, for instance, former White House aid Gary Sick complained that "The U.S. relationship with the Shah was so deeply ingrained in the minds and policies of everyone responsible that even a carefully reasoned expression of doubt was regarded as a heresy that could destroy a career." During the crisis in the Philippines, the Reagan administration adopted the classic, unworkable formula: "While President Marcos at this stage is part of the problem, he is also necessarily part of the solution."

So what then can we do about this unfortunate tendency of our leaders and the bureaucrats who carry out their policies, to become addicted to friendly dictators? Clearly exposés, analyses, conferences, and congressional post-mortems are not enough. They have been tried, yet the problem persists. As in domestic affairs, democracy is really the only force powerful enough to discipline the foreign policy elite and its bureaucracies. In our system this entails reviving Congress's historic role as a partner in policy-making and

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educator of the public. In recent years, unusual congressional activism has played an important and constructive role in weaning the executive branch from authoritarian attachments in South Africa, the Philippines and El Salvador. In Zaire too, a bipartisan congressional coalition that eventually ranged from Rep. Ron Dellums (S-Ca.) on the left to Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.) on the right, helped finally terminate aid to Mobutu. Of course no one can guarantee that Congress's participation will always be responsible. I was in the room when liberal Senate icon Frank Church (D-Id.) plumped for military aid to Mobutu to gratify Morrison-Knudsen, a home-state company with a big contract in Zaire. And I personally watched the most anti-Mobutu congressman, Mickey Leland (D-Tex.), go limp when approached by Grover Connell, a key contributor who had major business ties to Mobutu. Nevertheless, the prescription for a better congressional contribution to foreign policy is more democracy, not less: broader participation by leaders and members, better quality staff, more challenging and innovative public hearings, dialogue with the executive branch, more campaign finance reform, more openness.

Finally, there is important work to be done in organizing broad-based constituencies for foreign policy, particularly on human rights and humanitarian issues. Although international affairs have long been remote and puzzling for most people, this is the age of "globalization," and polls affirm that Americans are by no means isolationist. The real challenge is to take the 300,000 members of Amnesty International, the 200,000 members of Common Cause, and countless other concerned Americans and turn them into an effective political force. Among the potential organizers are major religious groups that have shown what they can do on issues like El Salvador and South Africa. Public-spirited foundations, which have poured funds into think tanks, conferences, and policy research, should consider supporting the growth of constituencies that can get good ideas implemented.

Otherwise, we might as well get ready for our next Mobutu. ●

Assigning Blame in Rwanda

How to break the cycle of revenge in ethnic conflict

By Leo J. DeSouza

On September 26, 1996, the United Nations's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda began genocide trials in Arusha, a small town at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The man in the dock was Jean-Paul Akayesu, former mayor of Taba in Rwanda and the first Hutu to be tried by the Tribunal. He is accused of atrocities in his district, where 2,000 Tutsi lie buried in two mass graves after being hacked to death with machetes.

Akayesu pleaded not guilty and asked for postponement, but when the trial resumed in January of this year, the international community renewed its cry for justice, i.e., for the blood of the Hutu.

Certainly, the public outrage is understandable. The story of the majority Hutu population's massacre of Rwanda's Tutsi minority is one of unimaginable viciousness and violence. The events immediately preceding the massacre and the subsequent months prior to the overthrow of the government by Tutsi rebels are familiar to—and abhorred by—most readers: On April 6, 1994, Rwandan President Juvenal Hab-

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yarimana was returning from a peace conference in Tanzania. Also aboard his plane was Cyprien Ntaryamira, president of neighboring Burundi. Both were members of the region's majority Hutu tribe. Preparing to land on the palace grounds, the plane was shot down, killing both men.

Reaction was instantaneous. Within hours the Rwandan Presidential Guard (dominated by Hutu) went on a rampage, killing Rwanda's Tutsi Prime Minister and other members of the opposition party sympathetic to the Tutsi. Soldiers and militiamen joined in. They fanned out across the city looking for Tutsi.

The slaughter had begun.

From Kigali the killing spread to towns, prefectural capitals, and hillside settlements. Across the country, the Tutsi were massacred in their homes, in open fields, along broad roads, and even as they hid in the bushes. They were slain with stones and axes, machetes and clubs, hand grenades and guns.

In a Roman Catholic church, an orange brick building in the town square of one village, 1,200 Tutsi sought refuge. The local Hutu mayor had promised police protection. But the following morning, soldiers appeared, blew open the locked church door with a hand grenade, and fired into the huddled mass. They returned the next morning to finish off those who had survived, leaving only bodies, blood and silence.

In another "safe" church, a Hutu mob swarmed in, hacking and clubbing frightened women and children to death. Tutsi patients disappeared from hospitals; Tutsi students from schools. Tutsi teenage girls were raped. Hutu mothers with babies strapped to their backs killed Tutsi mothers with babies strapped to their backs; Hutu 10-year-olds killed Tutsi 10-year-olds. Before it was over, half a million Rwandans were dead. They were almost all Tutsi, along with a few Hutu who had refused to go along with the carnage.

As the Tutsi were being decimated in Rwanda, Tutsi exiles living in Uganda felt the time for action was at hand. Calling themselves the "Rwandan Patriotic Front," the rebels entered the country from the north and advanced swiftly toward the capital. They had had a running battle with the Hutu ever since the country gained independence in 1962 and democratic elections had put the more numerous Hutu in power. Now, pushing with the ferocity of the dispossessed, the exiled Tutsi overran the country and by July 18 had taken over the capital and declared victory.

The victorious Tutsi quickly ascertained that the violence that had seized the country since the president's plane crash was not the result of random acts. They determined that the killings had been organized, encouraged, even ordered by the Hutu government officials at the highest level, whose intent had been to wipe out the Tutsi from Rwanda. Within two weeks, the Tutsi government announced that they would "proceed with war-crimes trials of ... the ousted government and ... civilians suspected of taking part in the genocidal attacks." The following December, the UN created the International War-Crimes Tribunal for Rwanda, with trials to be held in the neutral territory of Tanzania. Some 400 Hutu were to be charged with planning and organizing the massacres.

To those following the conflict on the evening news, the Hutu-Tutsi conflict seems entirely straightforward, if somewhat incredible. Comparisons to the Nazi extermination of the Jews have been tossed around. But the Rwanda conflict, while tragic, is considerably more complicated. The Tutsi of Central Africa are not quite the peace-loving victims of Western imagination. Over the years, they have committed a long list of atrocities of their own. The international community's ignorance of this history has caused them to treat the Tutsi who now rule Rwanda as noble victims—and to ignore the danger that the Tutsi will use their newfound power to exact bloody revenge on the Hutu. And if that happens, the cycle of genocidal violence in Rwanda will only continue. (Already, in Eastern Congo Tutsi are believed to be exterminating the fleeing Hutu refugees.) The only hope of ending that cycle lies in understanding the full history of Hutu-Tutsi relations and adopting an approach which takes that history into account.

A Centuries-Old Grudge

The Hutu's fear and hatred of the Tutsi has its roots in centuries of abuse. The Hutu were in Rwanda long before anyone, other than the Bantu tribes. The Tutsi arrived much later, around the 15th century, from the northeast. Theirs was a slow and peaceful infiltration. But over time they used their cattle and their warring skills to build their power and prestige. Whenever the Hutu needed the use of cattle, they worked for the Tutsi owner as payment. This simple arrangement eventually crystallized into a feudal-type class system. Land, cattle, and power were consolidated in the hands of the Tutsi, and the Hutu became serfs. Hutu peasants bound themselves to individual Tutsi lords, giving land, produce, and personal services in exchange for the lord's protection and use of his cattle. Tall and aristocratic in bearing, the Tutsi claimed they were divinely ordained to rule. In this manner, the Tutsi minority—between 10 and 20 percent of the population—held dominion over

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the Hutu for 400 years.

In 1885 Europe's colonial powers convened at a conference in Berlin to carve up the African continent. Rwanda was pronounced a German colony. The Germans ruled Rwanda through the Tutsi king, or Mwami, who, in turn, used German forces to strengthen his own position. Since the Europeans governed their colonies ostensibly to enlighten poor backward souls and to introduce them to the concept of fairness, one would have thought that the Europeans would have attempted to relieve the Hutu from serfdom. Far from it. What little flexibility had previously existed between the Tutsi lords and the Hutu vanished during the colonial era. It was during this period that the Mwami came closer to absolute rule than at any other time. Hutu rebellion was dealt with swiftly: Villages were burnt and leaders executed—with guns supplied by Europeans. It was no different when the Belgians took over during World War I. From 1916 until Rwandan independence in 1962, the Belgians ruled through the Tutsi aristocracy.

The Europeans were always attracted to the Tutsi. Unlike the Hutu, who are a dark people, short and squat, with coarse features, the Tutsi are tall and fair, with finer features that reminded Europeans of themselves. The Germans and Belgians romanticized the tall Tutsi as Africa's elite. Schools were open to them and admission to college was fixed in their favor, by requiring applicants to pass a minimum height test. They were assured of the best jobs.

This modus operandi was not unusual among colonial rulers. They often selected an elite minority group to help administer their far-flung colonies. It was a way of creating a client community, a tactic that divided the colonized population while consolidating colonial rule. In Lebanon, the Maronites were the anointed ones; in Egypt, the Copts; and in northern India, the Sikhs. In Rwanda, the system was even more flagrant: It consolidated the higher status of the Tutsi by emphasizing the differences between them and the Hutu. The Belgians even introduced identity cards, requiring everyone to be recognized by their tribe.

In the years leading up to Rwanda's independence, the country's High Council, a Tutsi body, called for urgent training of the Tutsi elite in preparation for self-government—a plain attempt to perpetuate Tutsi dominance. The Hutu leaders countered with "The Manifesto of the Bahutu" which sought to end the Tutsi's stranglehold on the government. The Belgians ignored the manifesto; the Tutsi spurned it. One Tutsi group said: "Relations between us and them have forever been based on servitude; therefore, there is no feeling of fraternity whatsoever between them and us.... Since our Kings have conquered all of the Hutu's lands by killing their monarchs and enslaving their people, how can they now pretend to be our brothers?" Tensions mounted in 1959. In a last ditch attempt to hold onto power, the Tutsi began massacring any Hutu they believed might stand in their way. Francois Karera, a senior politician in the former Hutu government, now an exile in eastern Congo, was a young teacher in 1959 when the Hutu rose up for the first time. He recalls that period as one when he, as an educated Hutu, was "hunted" by Tutsi for daring to aspire to a higher standing than a mere peasant farmer. But the Hutu prevailed. In the sporadic violence of that period, more than 20,000 Tutsi were displaced. In 1962, Rwanda became independent and held national elections. The Hutu candidate Kayibanda was elected President following a Hutu victory at the polls.

This did not sit well with the Tutsi. Their militants organized into guerrilla bands, and casualties escalated. Between 1961 and 1966, the Inyenzi, or cockroaches, as the Tutsi militants called themselves, launched 10 major attacks from neighboring countries—Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and Zaire. The rebellions prompted severe retaliation from the Hutu in power. In 1963, about 10,000 Tutsi were killed following an Inyenzi attack from Burundi. Eventually defeated, they fell back into exile. Tutsi refugees totaled 150,000. The story repeated itself in 1973 when more Tutsi were killed on suspicion of their involvement in a coup in which the Hutu General Habyarimana deposed Rwanda's first President. (Habyarimana subsequently died in the fateful 1994 plane crash that triggered the latest round of violence.)

Events in neighboring Burundi served to further inflame the Hutu-Tutsi hatreds in Rwanda. Rwanda and Burundi are practically replicas of one another. Alike in size and population, they have the same tribal mix of Hutu and Tutsi, share much of the same history, and were part of the same colony.

Like Rwanda, Burundi became independent in 1962. But unlike Rwanda, Burundi's Tutsi minority has retained power and, to this day, rules the country. In the late '60s and early '70s, when the Tutsi in Burundi began to fear that the country's more numerous Hutu would come to power as they had in Rwanda, the Tutsi came up with a simple solution: eliminate the Hutu in Burundi. In 1972, they set out to massacre every Hutu with an education, a government job, or money. Within three months 250,000 Hutu were dead, their homes destroyed.

"Many Hutu were taken from their homes at

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night," wrote David Lamb of the *Los Angeles Times* in his book *The Africans*. "Others received summonses to report to the police station. So obedient, subservient, and hopeless had the Hutus become that they answered the summons, which even the most unlearned soul knew was really an execution notice. Sometimes, when the death quotas at the prisons and police stations had been filled for the day, the queued-up Hutu were told to return the next day. They dutifully complied. The few Hutu who tried to escape the executioners seemed to make only token attempts. It was a pathetic sight. They would walk down the main road toward the border. If the Tutsi gendarme stopped them," he continued, "they would turn quietly back."

A quarter of a million Hutu were slain in three months, but the world did not take notice. Nobody called it genocide, then or now. And nobody asked that the Tutsi in Burundi be tried. (To this day, sporadic killing of the Hutu continues in Burundi, and recently there has been an ominous escalation.)

What Next?

Meanwhile, for lack of funds and assistance, Rwanda's unsuccessful Tutsi rebels lived quietly in exile until October of 1990. At that time, using Uganda as a base, the Rwandan Patriotic Front launched an invasion. Their stated aim: to take over the government in order to protect the Tutsi. By then, they had regrouped, retrained, and rearmed with new and heavier weapons. The initial assault was repelled by the Hutu government, but skirmishes continued through 1991 and 1992. A cease-fire was called in January 1993, but the Tutsi attacked again. On August 4, 1993, a peace agreement was signed in Tanzania. Implementation of the agreement, however, was slow. And when Rwanda's Hutu President was killed in April of 1994, there was widespread fear among the Hutu that another Tutsi rebellion was again underway. "In the Hutu mind, the Tutsi were going to bring back their regime; we the Hutu were going to work for them again, and the educated Hutu would be killed as in 1959," says Francois Karera, who insists the Hutu's subsequent massacre of the Tutsi was driven by fear and self-preservation. "The Hutu were determined," claims Karera, "not to allow the Tutsi to repeat history."

In contrast to the indifference with which the international community greeted the 1972 massacre of Hutu in Burundi, the 1994 massacre of Tutsi in Rwanda provoked global outrage. Television photographers and newspaper reporters told the tragedy as it unfolded, without reference to events in Burundi or what had previously transpired in Rwanda. The whole world judged the Hutu crimes as an isolated act.

Now that they are back in power, the Tutsi of Rwanda have embarked on their own broad investigation and prosecution of Hutu *genocidaires*. In contrast to the international tribunal in Tanzania, which is focused on the leaders of the massacre, the Rwandan government's probe is centered on lower level civilians. Early reports are troubling. In the first week of the new year, a Rwandan court at Kibungo sentenced two Hutu men to death after a four-hour trial. More trials have now begun in Kigali and Byumba. The prisons in Rwanda are currently packed with 85,000 Hutu. A facility built to hold 500 inmates now holds 7,000. Prisoners cannot sit or lie down for lack of space. So they stand, four to a square yard, in the muddy central courtyard. It takes hours to reach the latrines or the cooking fires. For 7,000 people there are 21 latrines, 5 of them designated for dysentery sufferers who try to stay nearby. There is no protection against heavy rain and many prisoners' feet show signs of rotting from gangrene. A few die every day. "It is horrific," said Dr. Alison Davis, of the relief agency Doctors Without Borders. "They are being treated like animals. It is true that some or many may have been involved in the killing, but the way they are treated is not justice."

Whatever their motivation—fear or simple hatred—the Hutu should, of course, be held accountable for their slaughter of the Tutsi. But while it's advisable to punish the Hutu leaders who incited the population to commit the atrocities, it is a grave mistake to go after the low level perpetrators. True, many crimes would go unpunished. But this is a situation where achieving justice at the level of individual cases is less important than putting a stop to the endless cycle of violence. If, with the acquiescence of the international community, the Tutsi government continues to prosecute low-level Hutus without also holding local Tutsis responsible for their past deeds, the Hutu of Rwanda will feel justified in taking their counter-revenge the next time they're on top. The only way to end the bloodletting in Rwanda once and for all is to declare a general amnesty for all but the highest level perpetrators and establish a truth commission similar to the one in South Africa, charged with investigating the fate of victims on both sides even as it forgives most of their attackers. This could initially be conducted under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity, or the UN, or both. But unless it is done, another genocide is waiting to happen: The Tutsi will kill the Hutu, and then, of course, the Hutu will kill the Tutsi. ●

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Fly the Fiery Skies

Long after ValuJet, many planes still don't have smoke detectors or fire extinguishers in their cargo holds

BY DAVID EVANS

REP. PETER DEFAZIO (D-ORE.) WAS apoplectic. "Any more needless deaths and we'll be crucifying you people!" he thundered. The unlucky souls on the receiving end of this tirade were a group of Federal Aviation Administration officials, assembled for a May 15 hearing of the House Aviation Transportation Subcommittee. The reason for DeFazio's rage: the discovery that, six months after the chiefs of America's largest airlines had stood with President Clinton at the White House and declared the installation of fire detectors a priority project, not one new extinguisher or detector had been installed. What particularly incensed DeFazio was the fact that the idea of using detectors and extinguishers had been around for years. "We had recommendations 13 years ago, we had another recommendation nine years ago from the National Transportation Safety Board, and both of these were just shucked off by the FAA as unnecessary and unwarranted." The result: Sixteen months after ValuJet flight 592 plunged into the Florida Everglades, in a crash where fire consumed the insides of the airplane, some 3,300 of America's 4,600 jetliners are still flying with neither fire detectors nor extinguishers in their cargo holds.

The Hole in the Theory

Fire detectors and pressurized bottles of Halon—a highly effective fire fighting agent—have long been used in the cargo holds of larger jets like the Boeing 777 and the Lockheed L-1011. But for years the airline industry has argued that the smaller cargo holds on smaller planes could contain any fires with their insulating blankets and nearly airtight construction. In theory, flames would be snuffed out through oxygen starvation, rendering fire detectors and Halon extinguishers unnecessary.

But the theory ignores the fact that the holds of these smaller jets, like the popular Boeing 737, are increasingly packed with hazardous cargo that render the "fire-prevention-through-oxygen-starvation" strategy grossly inadequate. The ValuJet disaster was the first case to bring this problem to the public's attention. That crash was apparently caused when the oxygen from a load of mislabeled canisters placed in the plane's cargo hold fanned an electrical fire into a fatal white-hot conflagration. The airtight construction theory had not accounted for the addition of more oxygen from the canisters. Of course, even if there had been Halon bottles in the plane's hold, the 110 people aboard flight 592 might not have been saved; the flow of oxygen that the canisters were adding to the fire probably would have overwhelmed the limited supply of Halon. However, a smoke detector in the hold of flight 592 could have made a difference. As it was, the crew didn't know the plane was on fire until smoke began filling the cockpit. Had they been alerted earlier they could have returned to Miami sooner or, if the fire had started while the plane was still on the ground, not taken off in the first place. Skeptics need only consider the fortuitous experience of the detector-equipped Federal Express DC-10 cargo jetliner that caught fire at 33,000 feet on September 5, 1996. Its detection system immediately alerted the crew, which made an emergency landing four minutes later—allowing all five crew members to escape before the aircraft was consumed by fire.

Since the ValuJet disaster, the government has endeavored to reassure the travelling public of the safety of air travel by banning the transport of oxy-

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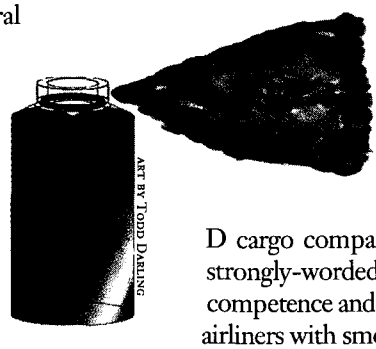
gen-generating canisters aboard passenger jets. But don't loosen your grip on that armrest yet. Oxygen canisters are only one of the many hazardous items routinely stored in aircraft cargo holds. Consider the grooming products packed in passengers' bags. Since the banning of the chlorofluorocarbons once used as propellants in the aerosol cans that dispense anything from shaving cream to deodorant, manufacturers have switched to natural gases like butane and propane. In the event of an in-flight fire in the cargo bay, these natural gases pose a serious danger. The pressure inside, say, a can of hair spray will build as the heat increases in the compartment, causing the can to cook off with explosive force. It won't necessarily punch through the side walls of the cargo compartment, but the can could strike the underneath of the passenger deck with enough force to strip threads on screws and cause the floor to buckle upward. The damage effectively opens a breach in the compartment's containment wall, allowing additional oxygen from the passenger cabin to flow into the cargo hold. Meanwhile, the propane released by the bursting can adds more fuel to the conflagration, compromising the whole "oxygen suppressing" design philosophy for smaller cargo holds.


ART BY TODD DARLING

As more people become aware of the threat posed by hazardous cargo, the call for fire extinguishing equipment on all airplanes with smaller cargo holds will get louder. Jim Jensen, ValuJet's vice president for maintenance and engineering, estimates that his company's airliners could be equipped with detectors and extinguishers at a cost of $70,000 to $100,000 per plane. In fact, his airline has been flying a DC-9 (in non-revenue service) equipped with a prototype detector, approved by the FAA on an experimental basis, to establish the detector's reliability and to test its susceptibility to false alarms. Delta Air Lines, too, has moved out with a design, already flight-tested and FAA-certified, and the equipment already is being installed in the first of the carrier's 60-plus Boeing 737s.

Delta and ValuJet are notable exceptions in an industry where most carriers seem to be waiting for orders. In a May 13 letter to Carol Hallett, president of the Air Transport Association, the airline industry's most powerful lobby group, National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Jim Hall wrote, "I urge your members to follow through on the commitment they made six months ago to retrofit their Class D cargo compartments." Hallet responded with a strongly-worded reply challenging Hall's technical competence and declaring that the task of equipping airliners with smoke detectors is being "expeditiously accomplished." Yet the time line she provided Hall showed that her member airlines plan to take five years to complete the job. In an attempt to justify this schedule, Hallett noted that the systems for each aircraft type must be certified so that they "do not compromise the safety of the basic aircraft design." Hallett countered, with some justification, "It is neither prudent for public safety ... nor the industry ... for airline mechanics to simply begin opening up aircraft, drilling holes, stringing wire and hanging new equipment without an engineering plan and required FAA approvals."

She's right, but the speedy progress of Delta and ValuJet, which fully involved the FAA, shows what can be done safely and expeditiously. It doesn't need to take another five years to install equipment that would give aircrews an extra five minutes warning to save themselves and their passengers. ●

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An Insane System

How our judicial and public health systems are failing the mentally ill

By E. Fuller Torrey

THE MAD, THE BAD, AND THE INNOCENT
By Barbara R. Kirwin
Little Brown and Company, $23.95

EVER SINCE 1760, WHEN London's Dr. John Monro testified as to the temporary insanity of a man accused of killing his servant, medical experts have argued whether "lunatic killers" should be held responsible for their actions. Dr. Barbara Kirwin, a New York psychologist specializing in issues of crime and sanity, has written an entertaining contemporary account of this genre. She utilizes material from over 300 cases in which she examined the accused (including individuals like Joel Rifkin, who murdered 17 Long Island prostitutes) as well as public records from the trials of John Hinkley, Erik and Lyle Menendez, Susan Smith, Colin Ferguson, John Salvi, and virtually every other high-profile case from the last 20 years.

Dr. Kirwin is at her best in describing the attempts by some defendants to fake insanity and the attempts by some defense lawyers to concoct a "designer defense" (Kirwin's apt term) to get their client off on an insanity plea. She has testified for the prosecution in all except two of her cases and has little sympathy for the his-deprived-childhood-made-him-do-it argument. She includes a solid chapter on the mechanics of examining and testing individuals to determine sanity and is clearly a competent forensic psychologist.

But although entertaining, the book is flawed by poor organization (individual cases are partially described, disappear, then reappear in later chapters), intermittent factual errors, and fuzzy logic when it comes time for solutions. For example, the author says that tardive dyskinesia, a side effect of some antipsychotic medications, "is irreversible and usually progressive," when in fact it is reversible in the majority of cases when the medication is stopped and is only rarely progressive. Mirroring the mantra of politically correct (and almost always politically liberal) mental health professionals, Dr. Kirwin blames "the policy of deinstitutionalization in the Reagan years" for the homeless mentally ill and the sad state of contemporary public mental illness services. In fact, deinstitutionalization moved into full stride under President Kennedy and continued under Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan. Politically it has been an equal opportunity disaster.

Dr. Kirwin's solutions are reasonable as far as they go, but they only reach first base. She provides compelling arguments for keeping television cameras out of the courtroom in cases involving insanity and raises the fundamental question of whether the adversarial system is even appropriate for such trials. She would also abolish juries in these trials and leave the decisions up to judges alone. I question the wisdom of this, as I believe that the public in general, and juries in particular, often have more common sense on these issues than judges, most of whom have trained as lawyers.

More fundamentally, Dr. Kirwin decries New York's failed public mental illness system and its relationship to the problems she describes, but offers no solutions. She criticizes New York Governor George Pataki's recent cuts in the state's mental health services budget, but fails to note that in 1993 (the most recent figures available) New York state spent $131 per capita in this area—three times as much as the median for all other states and $45 more per capita than Alaska, the next-highest spender. Clearly, money alone is not the answer. Nor does Kirwin address the fact that

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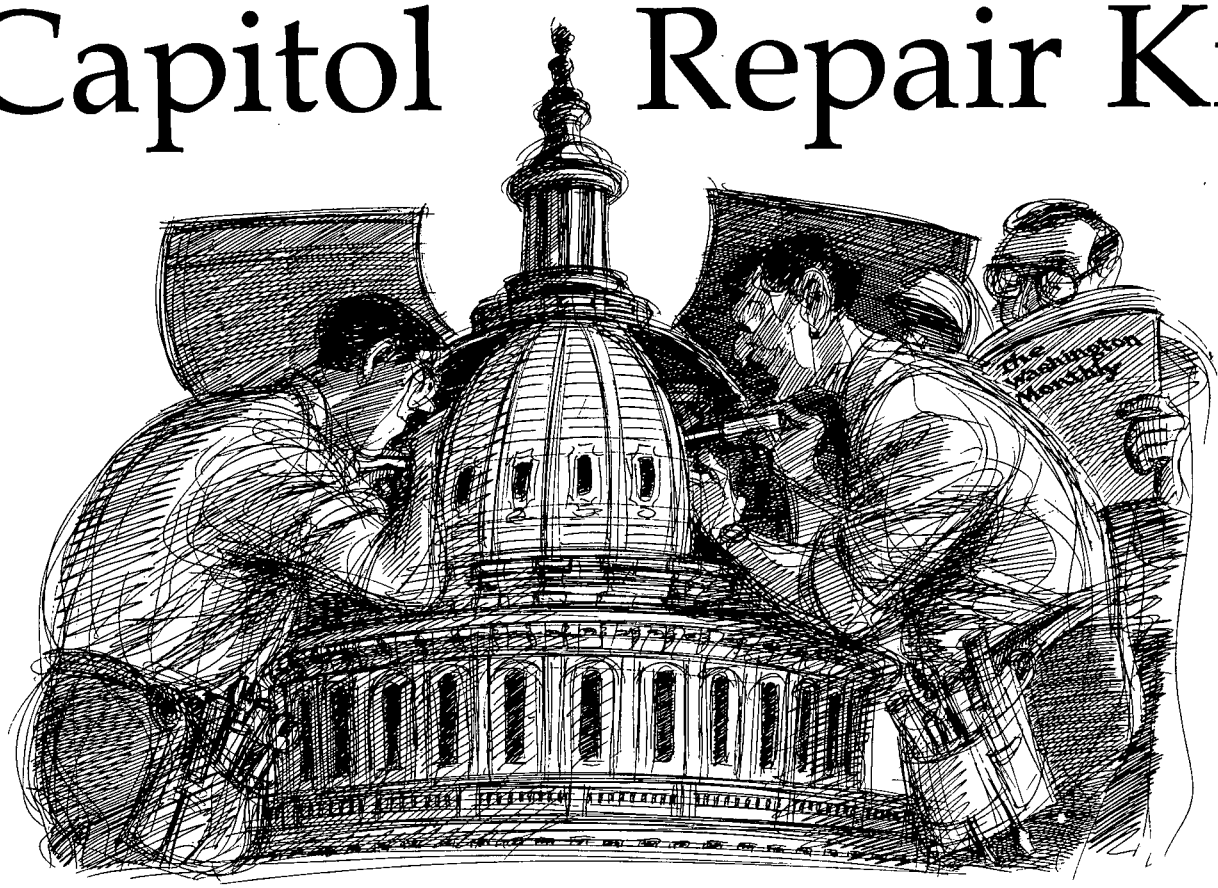

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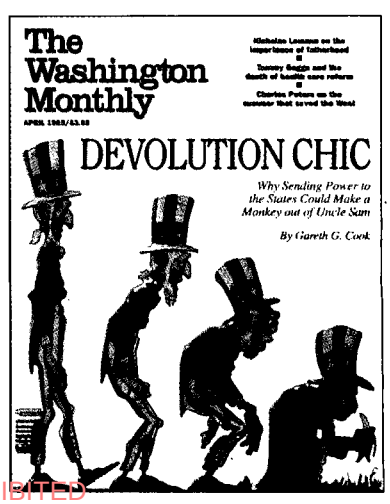

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some of the psychiatrists and psychologists working in forensic psychiatric units in state hospitals are among the most inept members of their professions. The sickest and most difficult to treat patients have, in essence, been turned over to some of the least competent practitioners. Why not require all psychiatrists and psychologists trained with public funds to work for two years in public facilities (as Dr. Kirwin did) as a payback for their publicly financed training?

Finally, Dr. Kirwin denounces the increasingly frequent sentencing of mentally ill offenders to prisons rather than to psychiatric hospitals, but does not connect this to the overall failure of the public mental illness system. Judges and juries sentence such individuals to the penal system precisely because the mental illness system is failing. From the point of view of judge and jury, at least a prison sentence ensures a minimum period of incarceration, however inappropriate the venue. This point was driven home to me when I testified in defense of an extremely psychotic individual who had killed a man. I urged the jury to sentence the man to the state psychiatric system rather than to prison despite the fact that the psychiatric system had failed to properly treat the man on several admissions and had discharged him without ensuring that he would take the medication he needed. As I made the appeal to the jury, I could see an overriding but unspoken question in their eyes: "Doctor, just who is crazy here?" The jury sentenced the man to life in prison. ●

If It Ain't Broke...

Keep your amendments off my constitution

By Lloyd Cutler

THE NEW FEDERALIST PAPERS
By Alan Brinkley, Nelson W. Polsby, and Kathleen M. Sullivan
Twentieth Century Fund, $23

THIS BOOK WAS COMMISSIONED by the Twentieth Century Fund in the belief that the American Constitution is under unfair attack from both the political left and right. The left is unhappy that the national government has done too little to meet what they consider to be our most pressing national problems—urban poverty, environmental deterioration, inadequate and expensive health care, racial and gender discrimination—and blames the Constitution for these perceived failures. The right is unhappy because the national government has done too much to tax away our income, reduce savings, increase the deficit, regulate minute details of our business activity and personal behavior, and discriminate in favor of minority groups; it also blames the Constitution for these perceived excesses. Both left and right urge corrective constitutional amendments. As Fund President Richard Leone explains in a short introduction, what is missing from the debate is a defense of the Constitution as it stands. It is the intent of *The New Federalist Papers* to make that case.

The original *Federalist Papers* have become almost as famous as the Constitution they explicate. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay wrote them to persuade the new American states to ratify the federal charter drafted by the Philadelphia Convention. Originally published in the newspapers of the time, the *Federalist Papers* could easily have disappeared from view along with the rest of the daily news of the 1780s. Instead, they became our most important record of the formation of the republic. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that as the Bible is to the Creation, so the *Federalist Papers* are to the Constitution.

From time to time in our history, advocates and opponents of major changes in our political system have invoked the *Federalist Papers*. Both North and South cited them during the run-up to the Civil War. After World War II, a group calling itself the World Federalists proposed a union of the major democracies around the globe (including China and South Africa). Boasting supporters such as Gen. George Marshall, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts, and Sen. Estes Kefauver, the group proposed a federal charter based largely on the American Con-

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stitution, under which the United States would be one of 20-odd constituent states. To advocate the idea, retired Justice Roberts, Clarence Streit and J. Schmidt wrote *The New Federalist Papers*, published in 1950.

Now we have another set of *New Federalist Papers*, written by a more scholarly triumvirate: historian Alan Brinkley, political scientist Nelson W. Polsby, and constitutional law professor Kathleen M. Sullivan. Far from advocating so fundamental a change in our political structure as the Roberts-Streit-Schmidt proposal, the message this time is essentially to leave well enough alone. (One is reminded of the first Reform Act that democratized the electorate and make-up of the British Parliament; during the debate an opponent of the Bill argued: "Reform, Reform, why do we want Reform? Things are already bad enough as they are!")

A nonradical triad if ever there was one, Brinkley, Polsby, and Sullivan have written an admirable and highly readable volume of centrist political thought, providing a welcome antidote to what we've been hearing from the right and left. They see the flaws in our constitutional system, but they see its virtues as well. They recognize our failures to achieve policy outcomes as decisively as the parliamentary systems, but they blame these failures less on the Constitution than on the political structures that have evolved beneath it.

Original Intent

Polsby reminds us that while the framers modeled much of our Constitution on Montesquieu's concept of the "separation of powers" among the executive, the legislature, and the courts, they departed from his theory in one crucial respect. They did not lodge the executive power solely in the president, having suffered from the unchecked power of King George. Nor did they lodge the legislative power solely in the Congress; as much as they admired the British Parliament for resisting the King's demands, they had endured the injustice of the Stamp Act and taxation without representation. And although they wanted the courts to protect them against the excesses of the other two branches, as a colony of religious dissidents and smugglers they feared being tried by judges appointed solely by the king.

For those reasons, the framers decided against three separate branches, each with absolute power in its own sphere; they opted instead for three separate departments with shared powers. Each department could exercise its principal power only with the consent of one or both of the other two. For example, laws passed by Congress were made subject to a qualified veto of the president and to review of the law's constitutionality by the courts. Appointments and treaties made by the president were subject to approval by the Senate. The jurisdiction and salaries of the judges were to be largely determined by Congress, and the power to appoint them was lodged in the president with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Obviously, under such a system, the three branches have to be in general agreement for the government to function effectively. But much as the Framers wanted effectiveness at the federal level—the lack of effectiveness having been the basic structural flaw of the Articles of Confederation—they feared a return to what they regarded as the tyranny of the British king and Parliament. This was the reasoning behind the framers' creation of what the original *Federalist Papers* described as a system of "checks and ballances."

When the three departments with shared powers do not generally agree, as happens frequently, the result is "gridlock." How to reduce gridlock without creating the tyranny of a narrow ideological majority is the issue that has preoccupied the American polity ever since our independence as a nation was won. It is also the major subject of this book.

As Polsby points out, Madison sought to check the "rise of faction"—his euphemism for the special interest groupings that dominated state legislatures—by creating a national legislature overseeing a vast territory with numerous regionally based interests that differed sharply from one another and were thus difficult to combine into cohesive national parties with narrow ideological goals. The Constitution itself is strangely silent about political parties, their sole mention being the indirect reference to primary elections in the 20th-century amendment abolishing the poll tax. But the Framers themselves, including the authors of the original *Federalist Papers*, quickly formed national political parties to elect the members of their new federal government and to make it work. As Madison had predicted, these parties, while differing on broad lines of principle—pro-federalist and anti-federalist—included so many disparate groups with disparate interests that internal party discipline was weak and narrowly ideological majorities could not be formed. Jefferson's Democratic Republican party was deeply divided between Southern slave owners and the Northern urban/agrarian poor; Hamilton's Federalist party split into a "don't rock the boat" Whig Party and a radical anti-slavery Republican Party. The resulting gridlock resulted in the Civil War.

The Civil War could fairly be blamed in large part on the principal weakness of the original Constitution—the entrenchment of slavery. This fault was corrected by the post-Civil War 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. They were adopted despite the difficul-

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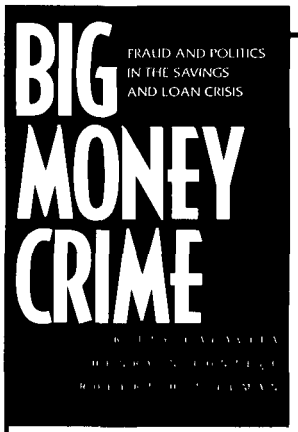

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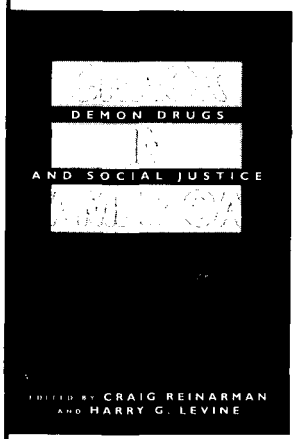

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ties the Amendment Article places in the way of an amendment, because the defeated states of the Confederacy had essentially been put into receivership under "carpetbagger" Reconstruction governments.

Today's right and left currently propose a number of other amendments. The right endeavors to require super-majorities to unbalance the budget or raise taxes, to set limits on the number of terms members of Congress can serve, to ban flag burning, to ban abortion, to protect school prayer and the public funding of religious schools, and most recently, Robert Bork's proposal to allow a mere Act of Congress to overturn Supreme Court decisions interpreting the Constitution. From the left, there are proposals to authorize limits on campaign expenditures, to guarantee a woman's freedom of choice, and, as discussed in Daniel Lazare's recent book, *The Frozen Republic*, to allow the House of Representatives, with the backing of a national referendum, to amend the Constitution—e.g. to strike the provision creating two senators each for both large and small states, in favor of a population-based formula.

The authors devote a large portion of their book to marshaling the strong arguments against many of these proposals, as well as against the very idea of frequently amending the Constitution. The framers went out of their way to make it difficult to pass amendments, and they succeeded. After the first 10 amendments were adopted as the Bill of Rights immediately after the Constitution was ratified, we have been able to amend it only 17 more times during the succeeding two centuries, and we have never called another constitutional convention. Contrast this with the state constitutions, which are usually amendable by popular vote and by easily called constitutional conventions, with the result that most state constitutions have hundreds of articles and are hundreds of pages long.

The New Federalist Papers also make a convincing case against what Chief Justice Earl Warren used to call "junk amendments" that constitutionalize a temporal economic or social policy (e.g. Prohibition) that turns out to be unwise but extremely difficult to repeal. Many of the current proposals, of course, fall into this category.

Students, politicians, and the citizenry at large should all be grateful for these *New Federalist Papers*. They will help us to appreciate the basic values of our enduring Constitution—the most significant political achievement in the long history of what the framers would have called "mankind." The fact that the baton of Madison, Hamilton and Jay has passed to a trio including Kathleen Sullivan tells us all we need to know about how adaptable our remarkable constitutional structure has turned out to be.

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Political Booknotes

Money Matters

by Isabel V. Sawhill

OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES the distribution of economic rewards in the United States has grown steadily more unequal. Although living standards have improved—at least a little—for just about everyone, the incomes of those at the top of the scale have increased much faster than those at the bottom. Between 1975 and 1995, the income of the top one-fifth grew by 35 percent while the bottom fifth's inched up by a mere one or two percent. The average household now has an income of $45,000 a year, but the spread between the richest one-fifth (with an average income of $109,000) and the poorest one-fifth (with only $8,000 a year) is wider than it has been in the past and wider than it is in other industrialized democracies. These growing disparities are partly driven by demographic changes, including more single-parent families at the bottom of the distribution and more two-paycheck families at the top. But they also result from a job market which rewards the talented and fortunate exceedingly well while leaving the less talented and fortunate with meager incomes. It's a high stakes game in which education is, more than ever, the key to success.

MONEY: Who Has How Much and Why?
By Andrew Hacker
Simon & Schuster, $25

These are just a few of the facts to be gleaned from Andrew Hacker's new book, *Money: Who Has How Much and Why?* In the book, you discover just about everything you ever wanted to know about this topic, at a level of detail that would delight any town gossip. For example, we learn that orthopedic surgeons have an average income of $304,000 a year whereas pediatricians earn only $113,000 a year; that in 1995, the paychecks of corporate chairmen averaged 190 times that of a typical worker, up from a ratio of 40 times the wages of a typical worker 20 years ago; that in the country's hundred largest law firms, partners typically make $446,000; that 137 Americans have personal fortunes exceeding $1 billion; and that Imelda Marcos has 3,000 pairs of shoes. It is often said that Americans would rather talk about sex than money. Hacker makes the topic of money not only sexy but, wherever possible, titillating. The prose bounces playfully off the pages, albeit in a tone that leaves little doubt in the reader's mind about the author's own ideology. Despite his explicit request that the book not be read as a plea for more income redistribution, it is hard to read it as anything else.

But an easy fluency with these issues doesn't add up to a new paradigm. What the country needs right now is not just more facts about who makes how much money. It needs to have a deeper conversation about how to interpret these facts and what to do about them. On these matters, I found the book disappointing. Although Hacker gives some attention to the underlying reasons for current disparities—and there are some fascinating glimpses of how wealthy individuals justify their very large incomes—in the end the author seems to favor an explanation that emphasizes greed and materialism over talent and energy. He has no faith in market solutions to the complex question of how much someone is worth, but neither does he have anything better to suggest.

The focus of the book is almost entirely on the unevenness of rewards. Equally important is the process by which some win and some lose in this competition for money. If the process were fair and efficient, then the fact that some do very well and others quite badly would presumably be acceptable. Certainly, we do not have a complete meritocracy in the United States. But this book, like so many others, gives pride of place to the handicaps of race and gender, when the real problem is that children who are born into very disadvantaged families, whatever their other characteristics, have few routes out of poverty. If we knew how to improve their life chances—while still preserving the right of families to have and raise their own children—perhaps those greedy billionaires would see the wisdom of sharing more of their wealth with others. Public opinion polls suggest that public stinginess about supporting welfare or other social programs is related less to greed than to disappointment about what such programs have been able to accomplish.

Yes, too much money is concentrated in too few hands, and too many are mired at the bottom, but this is not news, and hand wringing about the unfairness of it all won't produce solutions.

ISABEL V. SAWHILL *is a senior fellow at the Urban Institute.*

crime@internet.com

by John Markoff

IN 1983, THE MOVIE *War Games* catapulted Matthew Broderick to stardom. It also added the phrase "computer hacker" to the American lexicon. The tale of a bright high school student who brings the world perilously close to World War III by breaking into a secret military computer, *War Games* opened new vistas for adolescent misbehavior and inspired a generation of suburban nerds to cruise the Net in search of similar adventure.

Fourteen years later the stories that have emerged are no longer fictional. Clifford Stoll's *The Cuckoo's Egg*, Michelle Slatella and Joshua Quittner's *Masters of Destruction*, and *Cyberpunk*, which I co-authored with Katie Hafner, all explore the brave new world of young men obsessed with powerful machines and computer networks.

Now in *At Large: The Strange Case of the World's Biggest Internet Invasion*, David H. Freedman and Charles C. Mann add the story of an

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odd young fellow whose life is consumed by the desire to systematically break into thousands of computers via the Internet. Once inside, he doesn't appear to do very much; he looks for software, reads other people's e-mail and generally uses each new computer to leapfrog to the next one.

AT LARGE: The Strange Case of the World's Biggest Internet Invasion
By David H. Freedman and Charles C. Mann
Simon and Schuster, $24

Unfortunately, the authors offer little insight into the man they call Matt Singer (his real name is not revealed, presumably because he has never been arrested). We learn that he is a troubled individual who has spent time in an Oregon mental hospital. But by the end of *At Large*, Matt Singer is still largely a cipher. It appears that while the authors have spoken to members of Singer's family, they have not directly interviewed him in any depth. That's a shame, because Singer's behavior resembles that of many other computer criminals—like Kevin Mitnick, for example, a notorious computer outlaw who was arrested more than six times over the course of 15 years. An examination of what makes Singer tick could have given us a better understanding of computer outlaws in general.

One thing Freedman and Mann do well is to demonstrate how the rapid evolution of electronic crime has left law enforcement choking in dust. For example, despite the fact that it knew Singer's identity and location, the F.B.I. flailed for months and ultimately failed to arrest him. But the reader never feels outraged by the government's ineptness because Freedman and Mann offer such a benign view of Singer's crimes. Inside the computer underground, theft is usually justified by arguing that nothing was taken. The argument is that stealing software or illicitly looking through someone's e-mail is OK, because these electronic bits have not been taken away from their original owners. While they don't exactly endorse this view, the authors leave the reader with the disarming sense that Singer did little real damage.

In fact, by stealing e-mail and software from the computer security community during his four-year electronic joyride, Singer helped undermine the general safety of the Internet. He may also have compromised national security. The authors say Singer frequently traded information with a mysterious young Israeli who is identified only by the initials "JSZ." But what they don't mention is that JSZ is the target of an ongoing investigation by United States counterintelligence officials.

The lack of computer security that this book does such a good job of describing is a cause for serious concern—particularly as the Internet continues to carry more and more of the world's commerce. Although the Matt Singers of the world may have no intention to "rob" in the Willie Sutton sense of the word, the information they trade in the computer underground is remarkably useful to those who are motivated by more conventional criminal values.

JOHN MARKOFF *covers Silicon Valley for* The New York Times.

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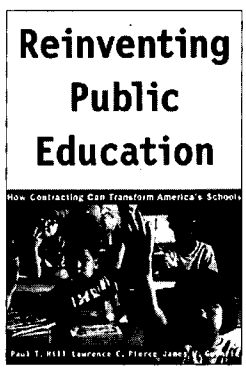

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Vanity Affairs

By Susan Watters

REAGAN PALS TELL A STORY about the night Nancy Reagan invited Clare Boothe Luce to dinner in the White House family quarters. Table talk came to a halt when the President, halfway through relating a dream, froze in embarrassment. Luce, then in her eighties, put her arm on the table, leaned toward the former matinee idol, and in a husky voice whispered, "I'd love to hear your fantasies." So much for the other women in the room.

Throughout her illustrious life as a vamp, successful playwright, ambassador, congresswoman, fashion plate, and arch conservative, Luce always got the better of any woman she befriended. So maybe it is not so surprising that even in death, Luce has managed to outwit, outshine, and undercut her biographer, Sylvia Jukes Morris, author of *Rage for Fame: The Ascent of Clare Boothe Luce.*

Take Morris's efforts to nail Luce down on the simple matter of her birth date—a predictable obstacle when tackling women of a certain age. For most biographers, a subject who lies about her age is a challenge to be confronted. Morris sees it as a justification to whine. After announcing that the date of Luce's illegitimate birth was March 10, 1903, Morris sniffs that the child, "for inscrutable reasons," was encouraged to celebrate birthdays a month later. She then complains of confronting the 82-year-old Luce with the discrepancy and being greeted with evasiveness and vague digressions about Easter Sunday, Good Friday, and the astrological signs of Aries and Pisces.

RAGE FOR FAME: The Ascent of Clare Boothe Luce
By Sylvia Jukes Morris
Random House, $30

One might scrape up some empathy for the high-handed treatment Morris is said to have suffered at the hands of Madame Luce were it not for the fact that she clearly asked for it. Despite her stated belief that subjects ought to "choose their biographers," Morris set her sights on Luce, and enlisted historian Daniel Boorstein and former Reagan staffer Selwa Roosevelt to help plead her case. Luce, who was feeling lonely and somewhat snubbed by the conservative renaissance, reluctantly agreed. Morris subsequently spent six years and a good deal of her own money following Luce to Hawaii, London, and Washington, nursing her while she was ill and occasionally bringing her breakfast in bed.

After years of deferring to Luce in exchange for scraps of information, Morris apparently feels it's her turn to have a say. She tries her best to be catty throughout the book, and at times she even succeeds in evincing a certain feline wit—as in her devastating description of Luce spiriting sculptor Isamu Noguchi, chisel in hand, into her Manhattan apartment to touch up her marble bust after a secret nose job. Equally priceless is Morris's account

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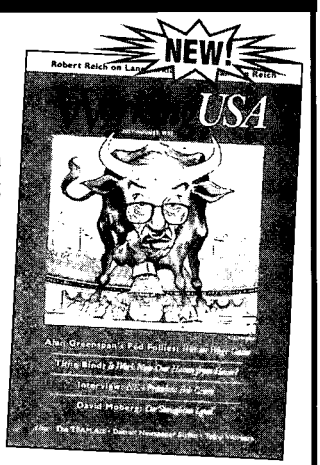

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of the ermine toilet seat (complete with paws!) that Luce fashioned from a hand-me-down coat belonging to her mother-in-law.

And Morris has managed to amass lots of titillating details about the range of Luce's sexual conquests. *Vanity Fair* editor Francis Crowninshield compared Luce's effect on Walter Lippmann to that of "a queen cobra on a field mouse." Another Luce devotee was Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, who obligingly shipped Rose and the kids—including 8-year-old Edward Kennedy—home to Massachusetts in anticipation of Luce's 1940 visit to his country place near Windsor, England. Luce returned the favor, leaving her husband, media visionary Henry Luce, home in New York. Randolph Churchill was another catch. So was Wall Street speculator and FDR adviser Bernard Baruch, 32 years her senior. Luce circled the pages in her diary to mark days when their affair was "consumated."

But even in the midst of these juicy tidbits, Morris's penchant for melodrama bogs the story down in pedantry and blather. Bringing down the curtain on the Baruch-Luce liason, she writes, "Deep feminine longings demanded that he bind himself to her by impregnating her. But his age and family preoccupations made this unlikely." And Morris's frequent skirmishes with her subject for control of the story quickly evolve from being vaguely amusing to tediously petty. In describing the death of Luce's jilted lover Donald Freeman, for instance, Morris disputes Luce's contention that her former *Vanity Fair* editor committed suicide over her by driving into a tree. Instead, Morris peevishly notes, "he might have intended not to kill but merely injure himself in order to elicit sympathy and perhaps rekindle her love."

Apart from the salacious segments, which are highly readable, the book is essentially a poorly organized collection of facts. The text frequently conjures up the sound of index cards dropping to the table. After recounting an anecdote in which Luce's father teaches her how to swim by throwing her into deep water, Morris follows up with three unrelated water references: Luce tried out for the 1920 Olympic swim team; she had houses in Hawaii and a river view apartment at the Watergate; and in her mid-fifties, she painted a picture of a child being thrown into the sea by a Herculean man. What emerges is not an insightful account of an influential and controversial woman, but a portrait of an author drowning in details and overwhelmed by her subject. Morris might want to set aside some time for reflection before moving on to Volume II. In considering how she was had, Morris might finally begin to get a glimpse of Lady Luce.

SUSAN WATTERS *is the Washington bureau chief of* W Magazine.

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Facing Up to Farrakhan

By William L. Van Deburg

THE OLD FOLK WISDOM THAT opposites attract would certainly seem to apply to the spate of biographers who have chosen Louis Farrakhan as their subject. Recent book-length studies of the controversial Nation of Islam leader have been penned by the American Jewish Committee's chief legal expert on anti-Semitism, a self-proclaimed "liberal-integrationist-feminist writer and sometimes integrationist and feminist activist," a Swedish anthropologist of religion, and the author of a guide to "etiquette in other people's religious ceremonies." To be sure, these are not exactly Islamic fellow travelers or brothers on the block. Some haven't even been able to wrangle a single fleeting interview out of the elusive Farrakhan. Nevertheless, they profess to know the man well enough to instruct other interested "outsiders" in the workings of contemporary black religious nationalism. Who are they trying to kid? No one, really. The best of these works (Mattias Gardell's *In the Name of Elijah Muhammad*), conscientiously seek balance and are based on extensive research in available documentary sources. At worst (*Looking for Farrakhan* by Florence Hamlish Levinsohn), they are still remarkably restrained and only occasionally approach the sensationalistic, axe-grinding excesses one regularly finds in "unauthorized" celebrity biographies and tabloid journalism.

Robert Singh, an Oxford-educated political scientist on the faculty of the University of Edinburgh, contributes importantly to this rapidly expanding body of literature, but his study is

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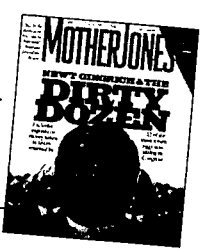

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- Why the telecommunications giants backed Clinton's re-election?
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marred by excessive name-calling and is made less than comprehensive by the author's inability to gain access to "insider" data. An admirer of Adolph Reed Jr., outspoken author of *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon*, Singh displays a similarly unsentimental and ultra-critical sensibility. Initially, this combative, take-no-prisoners style enlivens his commentary, but even those who agree that it is the scholar's sworn duty to repudiate Farrakhan for "the bigotry that he evinces and the manifest injury to racial comity that he causes" will question the need to use modifiers such as "demagogic," "reactionary," and "pernicious" so frequently. Space devoted to these barbs could have been used to provide additional information on Farrakhan's background—covered in a more comprehensive fashion in Arthur J. Magida's *Prophet of Rage*—and on the scope, content, and effectiveness of the Nation of Islam's economic and social action initiatives.

THE FARRAKHAN PHENOMENON: Race, Reaction, and the Paranoid Style in American Politics
By Robert Singh
Georgetown University Press, $23

Denied access to the Muslim inner sanctum, Singh wisely concentrates on charting Farrakhan's rise to prominence and on explaining his success in attracting a broad-based, supportive black constituency. Rejecting the commonplace notion that Farrakhan's success is a media-driven phenomenon, Singh skillfully analyzes a wide range of contributing factors. These include African-Americans' cultural conservatism, their frustration over the persistence of racial discrimination, and their mistrust of both mainstream institutions and black political "insiders." Farrakhan's organicist, racially essentialist world-view and his unceasing willingness to "give whitey hell" also have encouraged many to accept the 64-year-old former calypso singer's "self-projection as the autonomous personification of his race's 'authentic' collective interests." The author concludes that this rare ability to "cut across intrablack cleavages of social class, gender, age, religion, and region" has created an acute political dilemma for the established national black leadership cohort.

This ability also serves to place Farrakhan high on the list of those whom political historian Richard Hofstadter has described as master practitioners of the "paranoid style" in American politics. Singh's characterization of the Muslim leader as a "conventional conservative authoritarian populist" and a "prophet of radical black reaction, propounding a populist right-wing message" will not sit well with all readers, but the case is strongly argued. Comparisons made between Farrakhan and Joe McCarthy, David Duke, Pat Buchanan, Booker T. Washington, Malcolm X, and Al Sharpton are insightful and make useful contributions to the existing literature.

If lacking certain of the subtleties and nuanced understandings one typically finds in works penned by those with a well-developed sense of empathy for their subject, Singh compensates by offering thought-provoking political analysis and an intriguing conceptual model. A broad, charitable interpretation of the maxim which holds that "those who say they know don't know and those who know won't say," should cause us to conclude that this is all that most "outsiders" can be reasonably expected to accomplish.

WILLIAM L. VAN DEBURG, *author of* Modern Black Nationalism, *is a professor of Afro-American studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.*

Continental Divide

By Joseph S. Nye Jr.

EUROPE TODAY HAS BROKEN with the past more completely than at any time since the end of the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia in 1648," claims John Newhouse, one of this country's shrewdest observers of the old continent. But this break with the past has not produced a new set of policies for the future. Events, not governments, have taken charge.

In Newhouse's view, "Western Europe had a good Cold War. ... The threat from the East obliged Western Europeans to huddle together and helped them to break bad habits." Now that threat is gone. The result is a unified Germany that has become the largest state but provides little leadership; a divided Britain that has marginalized itself in terms of influence in Europe; and a France that suffers from high unemployment and a mood of domestic malaise. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany, political leaders agreed at Maastricht to intensify European unity as a means of "Gulliverizing" Germany. But the device they chose, European Monetary Union (EMU), has only contributed to the problems. Efforts to meet the strict fiscal criteria established to allow EMU to come into force have helped to depress growth and increase unemployment. EMU has been an elite project without broad popular support, and now European voters blame it for efforts to curtail overly generous national welfare and pension plans. Newhouse rightly concludes that a device designed to unify Europe has proven to be divisive.

Newhouse is too practiced an observer not to warn that we have been through cycles of Europessimism and Eurowearinessbefore—as recently as a decade ago. And some retreat from the excessive Europhoria at the beginning of the '90s was inevitable. And he is too fair-minded not to point out when the glass is half full as well as half empty. For example, while Newhouse notes a decline in confidence in German institutions, and worries whether the high-cost, metal-bending German economy can adapt to new technologies and global markets, he also quotes Anne-Marie Le Gloannees' sanguine view that "Germany works very well. It is the most stable and democratic society in Europe." And while critical of EMU, he believes the progress already made by the EU probably won't be undone. In other words, the situation is dim but not desperate.

EUROPE ADRIFT
By John Newhouse
Pantheon Books, $23.95

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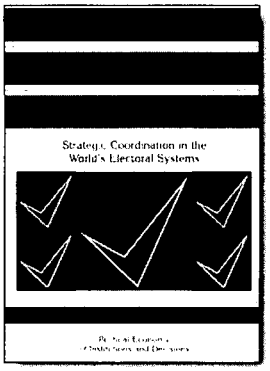
THE BEST IN POLITICS FROM CAMBRIDGE

Making Votes Count

Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems

Gary W. Cox



Although the classics of electoral studies have dealt with issues of coordination, this is the first book that employs a unified game-theoretic model to study strategic coordination worldwide and that relies primarily on constituency-level rather than national aggregate data in testing theoretical propositions about the effects of electoral laws.

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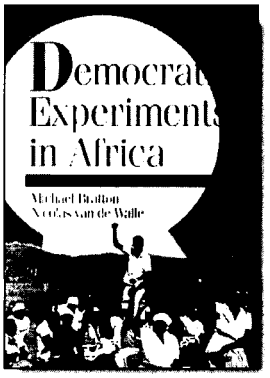
Democratic Experiments in Africa

Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective

Michael Bratton** and **Nicolas van de Walle



Between 1989 and 1994, almost all of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa underwent significant political reform, including in many cases the first competitive elections in a generation. How can this wave of political liberalization be explained? What are the long term prospects for democracy in Africa? This study constitutes the first comprehensive analysis of democratic transitions in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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The Principles of Representative Government

Bernard Manin

The thesis of this original and provocative book is that representative government should be understood as a combination of democratic and undemocratic elements. Challenging conventionally held views, Manin reminds us that while today representative institutions and democracy appear as virtually indistinguishable, when representative government was first established in Europe and America, it was designed in opposition to democracy proper.

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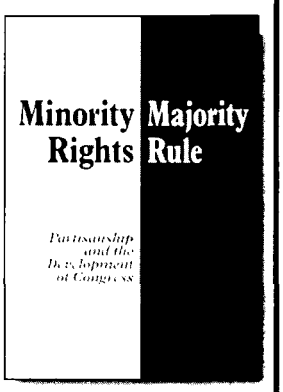
Minority Rights, Majority Rule

Partisanship and the Development of Congress

Sarah A. Binder



Minority Rights, Majority Rule seeks to explain why majority parties have consistently been so powerful in the U.S. House of Representatives while minorities often prevail in the Senate. Binder charts the history of minority rights in both chambers and explains how partisan battles—fought under rules inherited from the past—have shaped the creation and suppression of minority rights.

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One of the most interesting chapters in the book is Newhouse's description of regionalism within Europe. Newhouse writes:

> National cultures are being squeezed between a broader popular culture and briskly reviving regional cultures. National capitals in Europe are losing control of their economies to the parallel processes of globalization and internal regionalism. Much of the investment in infrastructure is being done at regional and local levels, often on a cooperative basis with neighboring regions. In Germany, federal spending is declining as state and local spending rises. Briefly, the nation-state is being squeezed—pressed to transfer authority both upward and downward.

Newhouse does not forecast the end of the nation-state nor the success of secession in Northern Italy or Catalonia. But he does see a political landscape being redrawn as countries and regions move, like iron filings, toward different magnets. National capitals remain important, but Brussels and local councils have both become more influential than in the past.

In the face of these uncertainties, including the problems of disorder in Russia, conflict in the Mediterranean, and change in Central Europe, the role of the United States remains critical in Europe. Rather than becoming obsolete as many observers predicted at the beginning of this decade, NATO has become a popular institution that provides a sense of stability. Ironically, a Europe adrift after the Cold War has increasingly come to value an American anchor. On this and many other dimensions, John Newhouse has provided an insightful and very readable account.

JOSEPH S. NYE JR. *is the dean of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.*

The Novel That Could Have Been

By Thomas E. Ricks

THERE IS A GOOD NOVEL TO BE written playing on the friction between the Clinton administration and the U.S. military: A huge cultural divide separates the White House yuppies from the uniformed military, and behind it is a growing gap between the military and the nation's political, intellectual, and economic elites. More broadly, if the Cold War is indeed considered to have been a war, we are in unexplored territory because, for the first time in our nation's history, we maintain a large military establishment during peacetime. And we have a military that is probably better than it has ever been, yet also more partisan than ever before—and is being used heavily as a tool of foreign policy by an administration it doesn't really trust. What a rich set of ingredients for a fresh, nervy post-Cold War thriller.

STATE OF THE UNION
By David Callahan
Little, Brown, $23.95

State of the Union is not that novel. Instead, it is a tired updating of the same old Washington adventure story. Remember the Kevin Costner movie *No Way Out*? Here we go again—with the Russians replaced by terrorists, as they generally are in '90s thrillers: The hero is a very junior officer, in this case an Army lieutenant, who cuts a swath through the Pentagon and ultimately defeats the bad guys running the Defense Department. At one point, the novel's lieutenant hero even represents the Joint Chiefs at a key meeting with the No. 2 officials from the CIA, State Department, and the National Security Council. Oh, sure. This is roughly equivalent to letting an intern run the Senate for the majority leader.

Why isn't there any good fiction written about the post-draft military? We've had all-volunteer armed services for nearly a quarter-century. Maybe someone should sponsor a contest.

THOMAS E. RICKS, The Wall Street Journal's *Pentagon correspondent, is the author of* Making the Corps, *to be published in November.*

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The Real Asian Money Scandal

Falwell

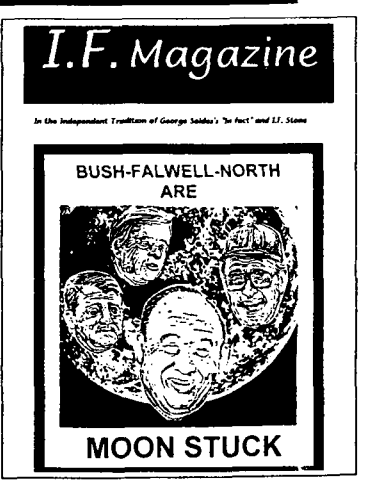
Moon

Bush

Only in Washington's New Investigative *I.F. Magazine*:

Rev. Sun Myung Moon calls America "Satan's harvest" and vows to subjugate its people under a Korea-based theocracy. But the self-proclaimed messiah has bought vast political influence in Washington by spreading around billions of dollars, from mysterious Asian sources, mostly to conservatives.

***I.F. Magazine* goes behind Moon's P.R. to show how he has used his *Washington Times* to aid political friends and hurt enemies. Investigative reporter Robert Parry tracks a $3.5 million secret payment to Christian Right leader Jerry Falwell and exposes George Bush's new job as a Moon front man.**



"First-rate investigative reporting," says media analyst Edward S. Herman. "Parry is showing what can be done when journalists dig for truth and print it," adds press critic Norman Solomon.

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"Required Reading"

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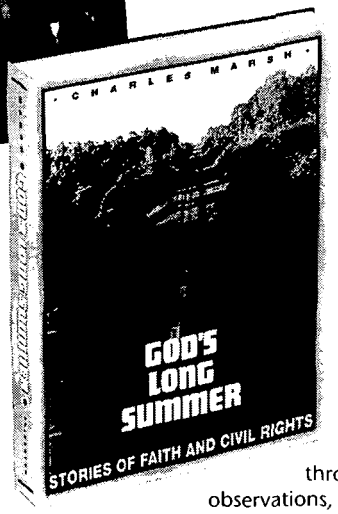
God's Long Summer

Stories of Faith and Civil Rights

Charles Marsh



The turmoil of the civil rights movement reached its peak in Mississippi in the summer of 1964. Charles Marsh revisits that tumultuous time, when individuals converged in violence and when images of God collided in conflict. Marsh combines groundbreaking historical research and in-depth interviews with participants across a wide spectrum, from a Ku Klux Klan leader to a white Baptist pastor to a militant black organizer. He is especially interested in how these people justified their actions with religious convictions: they all believed that God was on their side.

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—John Lewis, Member of Congress, 5th District, Georgia

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The Hidden Welfare State

Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States

Christopher Howard

Despite costing hundreds of billions of dollars and subsidizing everything from homeownership and child care to health insurance, tax expenditures (commonly known as tax loopholes) have received little attention from those who study American government. This oversight has contributed to an incomplete and misleading portrait of U.S. social policy. Here Christopher Howard analyzes the "hidden" welfare state created by such programs as tax deductions for home mortgage interest and employer-provided retirement pensions, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit.

The Hidden Welfare State will appeal to anyone interested in the origins, development, and structure of the American welfare state.

"*The Hidden Welfare State* offers an excellent account of the origins and development of tax expenditures oriented toward social goals. The book will make students of social policy rethink many of their key assumptions about how social policies are adopted and how they expand."—Margaret Weir, Brookings Institution

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